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Collaboratively Designed Customized Ethnic Dress: An Exploration Of Consumption Motivation Of First And Second Generation African Immigrant Women In US

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COLLABORATIVELY DESIGNED CUSTOMIZED ETHNIC DRESS: AN EXPLORATION
OF CONSUMPTION MOTIVATION OF FIRST AND SECOND GENERATION AFRICAN
IMMIGRANT WOMEN IN US

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College

In partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

Human Ecology
The Department of Textiles, Apparel Design, and Merchandising

by

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August 2018

I dedicate this work to my husband and my children. Joseph you led the way for us. To my beloved children: Namayi, Mulaa, Opiri Junior and Anindo you can make it.

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To God be all the glory and honor for ever and ever, without Him I would be nothing and I would accomplish nothing. He gave me the life, the strength, the wisdom and the grace to complete this work. I pay my tribute to the trinity, God the father, Jesus Christ the son and God the Holy Spirit for who I am today.

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ABSTRACT

African immigrant women in the USA are often seen wearing their ethnic dress when attending social functions such as church, weddings, and parties. They work with a tailor to help them create and customize their ethnic dress. With this in mind, the study sought to explore the motivations to collaboratively customize and wear the ethnic dress among these women. A Means end chain, MEC theory (Gutman, 1997) was used as the theoretical model. To answer the research questions, a qualitative approach was utilized, using semi structure interviews with the soft laddering technique and photo elicitation methods. A convenience sample of 15 first and 9 second generation African immigrant women were purposively sampled for the study. Data was collected and analyzed. The results revealed fourteen attributes, eleven consequences and seven values that motivated consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. There were strong links between the attributes, consequences and values that revealed dominant themes: functionality, self-expression, self-esteem, adaptability and versatility, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, and cultural identity. The study found that the women were motivated by both the process and the product of collaborative customization resulting into a proposed model of collaborative customization. The first-generation women were more emotionally attachment to their ethnic dress, developed personal relationships with the tailor and typically wore their ethnic dress more often with elaborate headgear, but the second generation preferred less elaborate headgear and wearing with jeans, contemporary blouses, and needed their mothers to approach the tailors. These findings supported previous studies on ethnic dress and acculturation. Collaborative customization enabled consumers to become proactive in the design process, thus contributing to sustainability. Consumer's got emotionally attached to their dresses translating to long clothing life span and reducing quick disposal of clothing.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Overview and Background

The population of immigrants in the United States of America has increased in the last decade. According to the 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS), immigrants and their United States of America-born children now number nearly 84.3 million people, which is approximately 27 % of the overall US population. In 2015, there were about 2.1 million African immigrants living in the U.S. (Anderson, 2017) with nearly one third of them coming from West African regions. Each immigrant group expresses their cultural identity by using artifacts such as unique ethnic dress (Eicher et al., 2014). Most immigrants migrate with their traditional dress, and artifacts to their new home. Immigrants bring with them, and or create their traditional clothing styles and accessories associated with their heritage, which they use for self and social identity within the USA (Eicher et al., 2014 p.2).

During the acculturation process, the immigrants interact with the host culture, the interaction influences their attitudes behaviors and values (Phinney, 1990; 2003). The immigrants may assimilate, integrate, separate, or marginalize themselves from the host culture (Berry, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010). The degree to which immigrants undergo each of the four aspects of acculturation (integration, separation, marginalization and assimilation) determines their level of ethnic identity. Phinney (2003) defines ethnic identity as “a dynamic, multidimensional construct that refers to one’s identity, or sense of self as a member of an ethnic group” (2003, p. 63). From her perspective, one identifies with a group that asserts a common ancestry and culture. Ethnic identity is created and constructed when these individuals become aware of their uniqueness within the larger sociocultural environment (Phinney, 2003).

Despite acculturation and adaptation into the host culture, the freedom in the USA allows the immigrants to use their ethnic dress and maintain their cultural identity and values (Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedde, 2001). Age at the time of migration, gender and generation of the immigrant moderates this cultural identity and adaptation (Phinney et al., 2001). According to Phinney et al., (2001) adult females are the culture carriers, they remain at home and perform some of their ethnic practices. Research indicates that African immigrant women have maintained their use of ethnic dress in the USA (Strübel, 2012). First and second generation African immigrant women wear their ethnic dress when they attend special ceremonies such as weddings, parties, religious events, etc. For example, to create their ethnic dress, African women immigrants collaboratively customize and design their ethnic dress with the help of a dressmaker using fabric sourced from Africa (Anikweze, 2012). Collaborative customization includes “a dialogue with individual customers to help them articulate their needs, to identify the precise offering that fulfills those needs, and to make customized products for them” (Gilmore & Pine, 1997, para. 4). In this research, collaborative customization has been used to describe how the African immigrant women design their ethnic dress often with the help of a tailor or dressmaker, by incorporating their needs such as the style, findings and fabric in the designing of their ethnic dress.

Several reasons motivate African immigrant women to consume collaboratively customized ethnic dress in their host country. Means-End Chain (MEC) theory (Gutman, 1997) states that consumers will be motivated to use a product because of its attributes, the benefits they get from using the product and the underlying values of consuming it. Consumers first identify the attributes of products based on the perceived functional and psychological benefits or risks of the product and consider the motivations and consequences of their choices before

selecting the product (Gutman, 1997). The main objective of this process is for consumers to achieve their underlying self-values (Reynold & Gutman, 1988) through consumption of the product. According to Gutman (1982), consumers use means (products) to achieve ends (state of being).

Means-end chain (MEC) theory identifies the attributes of the product that motivate consumer use, the consequences of using the product and the underlying values of using the product (Reynold & Gutman, 1988). Using this theory, the assumption can be made that African immigrant women are motivated by the attributes of the collaboratively customized dress, the benefits they enjoy while using this dress, and the underlying values they gain when consuming collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Collaborative customized ethnic dress is a desired dress that is created when participants work with the tailor. Participants choose fabric, some sewing notions and get the expertise of the tailor to help design and create the dress.

Justification and Research Questions

Several researchers have examined African women and apparel, topics previously covered include, black women acculturation and clothing consumption (Gbadamosi, 2012); design and development of western-style Nigerian apparel (Adelaja, Salusso, & Black, 2016); ethnicity, body shape differences and female consumers' apparel fit problems (Makhanya, Klerk, Adamski, & Mastamet-Mason, 2014), but very little extant research addresses African immigrant women and motivation for ethnic dress. This research will seek to explore motivations for creation and consumption of ethnically inspired, collaboratively customized and designed dress among African immigrant women living in the US. Although Adelaja et al. (2016) gave insights into designing western style apparel of Nigerian women of varying body shapes using African textiles, they did not consider the motivations for the consumption of collaboratively customized

ethnic dress. Their findings reflect the need to design western style dress using African fabric, but not the motivations (attributes, consequences and values) underlying consumption of the ethnic dress.

When immigrants come to the USA, they acculturate at different degrees. The degree of acculturation and adaptation depends on gender and the age at the time of immigration (Phinney et al., 2001; Sam & Berry, 2010), and thus the speed of acculturation is likely to influence immigrants' consumption of ethnic dress. Additionally, differences and similarities in consumption and motivations for collaboratively customized ethnic dress may exist between first and second-generation immigrants.

To answer the research questions, the laddering technique, an interview technique used in Means end chain MEC theory which helps to reveal underlying, deeper meanings of consumer consumption motivation was employed. The research questions were:

1. What types of ethnic dress do African immigrant women collaboratively custom design?
2. What motivates African immigrant women in the USA to collaboratively customize their ethnic dress?
3. What attributes, consequences (functional and psychological benefits) and values do African immigrant women get from collaboratively customized ethnic dress?
4. What motivates African immigrant women to wear their ethnic dress?
5. Are there differences between the motivations of first generation and second-generation African immigrant women?

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivations to collaboratively customize ethnic dress among African immigrant women living in the USA. The researcher sought to

investigate and examine the attributes, consequences, and the underlying values of consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress using MEC theory. The researcher also explored differences and similarities between motivations for creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among first and second generation African immigrant women living in the USA. The researcher sought to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify ethnic apparel that were collaboratively customized by African immigrant women.
2. To understand reasons that motivated African immigrant women to collaboratively customized ethnic dress
3. To identify differences in motivations for the creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress between first and second generation African immigrant women.
4. To examine the attributes, benefits, consequences, and values of creating and collaboratively customized ethnic dress using MEC theory.

To address the purpose and the research objectives, qualitative methods were used to collected data from first and second generation African immigrant women living in a metropolitan city in the southeastern part of USA.

Definition of Terms

African immigrant

Foreign born, an individual who was born in Africa and migrated to the country (US Census Bureau, 2016, para. 4).

Attributes

Both concrete and abstract visual tangible and intangible characteristics of the product (co-

designed ethnic dress) (Costa, Dekker & Jongen, 2004, p. 408).

Co-designing

Is the collective creativity of collaborating designers...co-design in a broader sense to refer to the creativity of designers and people not trained in design working together in the design development process (Sanders & Stappers, 2008, p. 6).

Collaborative Customization

Involves a dialogue with individual customers to help them articulate their needs, to identify the precise offering that fulfills those needs, and to make customized products for them (Gilmore & Pine, 1997, para. 4). A term used to describe how the African immigrant women design their ethnic dress with the help of a tailor in this research.

Consequences

Unexpected functional and psychological implications of purchase, consumption of product (Costa, Dekker, & Jongen, 2004, p. 409).

Ethnic Dress

As identification with and the wearing of clothing and/or accessories which symbolize an individual's ethnicity (Forney & Rabolt, 1986, p. 4).

Ethnic Identity

A sense of peoplehood within a group, a culture, and a particular setting and it includes knowledge and understanding of one's in group affiliations.

...derives from experience and is constructed over time with the actions and choices of individuals are essential to the process. (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p. 271).

First generation immigrant

Are individuals who were born outside the USA, but they migrated to the country (US Census Bureau, 2016, para. 6). For this study, it refers to an individual who migrated to the USA when mature.

Immigrant

An individual who was born outside the USA (foreign born) US Census Bureau, 2016, para. 1).

Second generation immigrant

An immigrant also referred to as USA native (born in the United States or territories) and have at least one foreign-born or immigrant parent (US Census Bureau, 2016). In this study, it is used to refer to an individual who migrated to the USA at age 5 or below.

Value

Specific modes of conduct or end-stages of existence that are permanently believed to be personally or socially preferable, i.e., the individual's existential goals or subjective norms (Costa, Dekker & Jongen, 2004, p. 409).

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section discusses the concepts relevant to the study and these include: African immigrants, First and second-generation immigrants, African regions, Women and ethnic dress, African women, body and ethnic dress, motivations for apparel consumption, apparel designing, co-designing, and collaborative customization. Finally, the theoretical framework of the study and a summary of the chapter is considered.

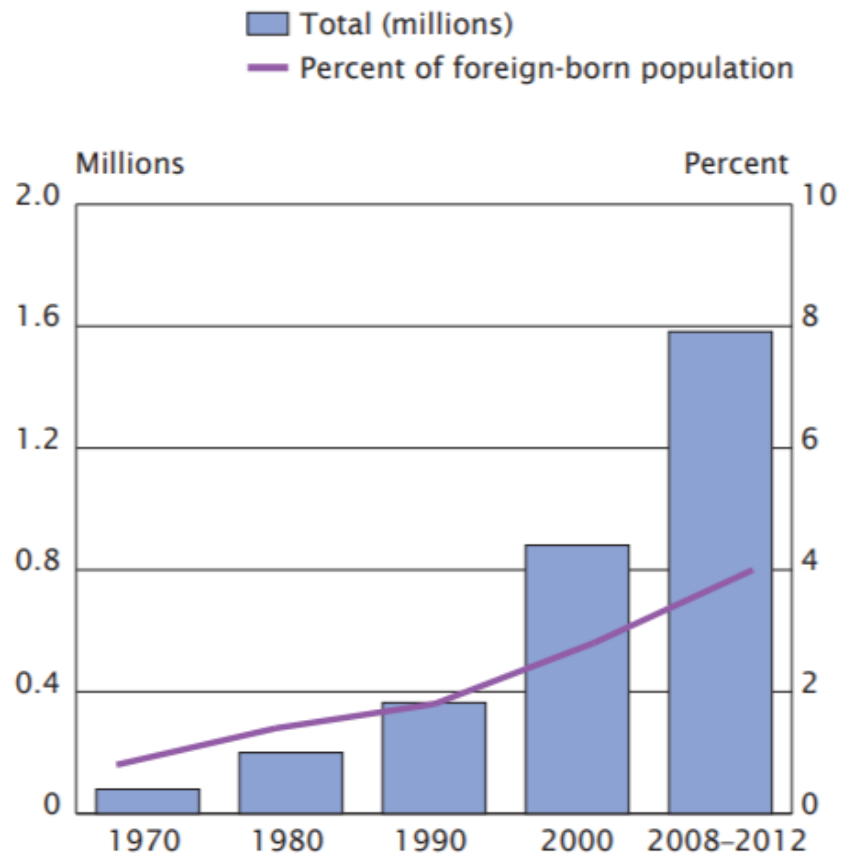
African Immigrants

Immigrants are a foreign-born population comprising of: those not born in the USA, naturalized citizens, legal permanent residents, temporary workers, and foreign students (USA Census Bureau, 2016). The term “immigrants” also refers to foreign born and excludes those born to legal and illegal immigrant parents in the United States (Zeigler & Camarota, 2015). Currently, the USA population is composed of diverse people from around the world; this is because of the increase in the number of immigrants. According to the USA Bureau of Census (2000a, b) by the year 2050, the racial composition of the USA will change significantly because of immigrants, and one of the significant increases will be Africans.

African immigrants are currently a small share of the USA immigrant population; however, their population has continually increased (see figure 1) almost doubling in every decade since 1970 (Anderson, 2017; Gambino, Trevelyan & Fitzwater, 2014). In 2015, there were 2.1 million African immigrants living in the USA, up from 881,000 in 2000 and very significant compared to the 80,000 in 1970 (Anderson, 2017). African immigrants today account for 4.8 % of the total immigrant population in the USA (Anderson, 2017). From 2000 to 2013, the African immigrant growth rate increased by 41 %, and was the fastest growing segment of immigrant population in the USA (Anderson, 2017; Gambino et al., 2014).

The Foreign-Born Population From Africa: 1970 to 2008–2012

(Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)



Source: U. S. Census Bureau, Decennial Censuses, 1970 to 2000 and 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 1. Immigration from Africa Since 1970-2012. Adapted from Gambino, P.C, Trevelyan, E. N & Fitzwater, J.T., (2014). The Foreign-Born Population from Africa: 2008–2012 American Community Survey Briefs Report /12-16, P.1

Historically, thousands of Africans came to the USA in the 16th century during the transatlantic trade when they were brought in as slaves (Anderson, 2017). The experiences of the African Americans who came at that time, may be quite different from those of the recent immigrants. The 16th century African Americans were forced into migration, while most of the

recent immigrants came voluntarily. Thus, this study will focus on the more recent, voluntary African immigrants. While the experience of African Americans who are decedents of the early African immigrants is valuable, the focus of this work will be exclusive to first and second generation African immigrants.

Today there is voluntary migration through the Diversity Visa Program and the Refugee Act of 1980 (Anderson, 2017). The Diversity Visa Program of the 1990's had the objective of promoting immigration from underrepresented countries and regions of the world and this increased the population of African immigrants in the USA (Thomas, 2011). The Diversity Visa Program Act of 1990 caused an increase in the number of African immigrants from sub-Saharan Africa to enter the USA (Anderson, 2017). The Refugee Act of 1980 led to the coming of African immigrants from war torn countries such as Somalia, Sudan, Ethiopia, DR Congo and Eritrea into the USA (Anderson, 2017).

McCabe (2011) states that the voluntary migration from Africa to the United States also increased the African born population in the USA significantly. From 1980 to 2009, the African born population in the USA grew from just under 200,000 to almost 1.5 million (McCabe, 2011). In 2009, African immigrants from Western Africa accounted for a third of the African born population in the USA (American Immigration Council, 2017). In 2015, five African countries - Nigeria, Egypt, Ghana, Ethiopia and Kenya accounted for 50 % of the African immigrants in the USA (see Figure 2).

About 39 % of the African immigrants have settled in the South, 25 % in Northeast, 18 % Midwest and 17 % in the Western region of the USA respectively. Some states such as Texas, New York, California, Maryland, New Jersey, Massachusetts and Virginia have at least 100,000 African immigrants. Of the ten states with the largest African immigrants, five had percentages

that were at least twice the national percentage: Minnesota (19 %), Maryland (15 %), Virginia (9 %), and Georgia and Massachusetts (both 8 %) (Gambino et al., 2014).

African immigrants come to the United States of America for economic, political and social reasons. Specific reasons may include, looking for employment opportunities, educational advancement, reuniting with family members and escaping from political instabilities in Africa (Arthur, 2000; Frazier, Darden & Henry, 2010). For Africans, migration does not change their family life structure, they continue to live similarly to how they lived in Africa. For example, Arthur (2000) in a study to explore the African immigrant experiences in the USA found that, immigrant families replicate African Kinship structures that are central to their survival in the United States. They tend to cluster neighborhoods for collective security in dealing with the problems of daily living. For the women, traditional roles and expectations defining how children are to be raised are predetermined, and deviations from those roles are rare (p. 112). As Africans migrate they tend to hold to their culture in almost all aspects of their lives including food and dress (Arthur, 2000).

Regions of Africa, Showing Countries With Largest African-Born Populations in the United States: 2008–2012



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008–2012 American Community Survey, 5-year estimates.

Figure 2. Leading Countries of African Immigrants to the USA Adapted from Gambino, P.C, Trevelyan, E. N & Fitzwater, J.T., (2014). The Foreign-Born Population from Africa: 2008–2012 American Community Survey Briefs Report /12-16, P.2

African Values and Culture

Extended family support is considered important in the African culture (Forehand & Kotchick, 2016). According to Fairchild-Keyes (2016), African families have values that they consider important in their families, acknowledgement of God and faith living is often a priority

of African families followed by commitment to family and the importance of education. These values are important aspects of their culture and cultural identity.

Hofstede (2011) identified six dimensions of culture as: the power distance index, individualism vs collectivism, masculinity vs femininity, uncertainty avoidance index, long term vs short term orientation, indulgence vs restraint (p.8). In his research, Hofstede (2011) found that some characteristics manifested more in certain societies and not others. For example, given the dimension of individualist vs collectivist, African societies lean more toward collectivism as opposed to individualism. Members in a collectivist society are loyal to their immediate extended family members and they develop a relationship network with parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and others. Among African families, individuality and uniqueness is discouraged, it is about 'we' and not 'I'. The family structure is based on the masculinity dimension of culture, wherein the males are the heads of the society and they dictate rules and laws, while the women are subordinate. As African families migrate into other parts of the world they tend to carry their culture with them (Hofstede, 2011).

As indicated by the findings of Hofstede (2011) immigrant women from Africa come from cultures that are significantly different from that of the United States. While in the USA African women continue with their roles as mothers and caretakers (Arthur, 2000). As they assimilate into their new culture, they are required to learn a new language, take up new roles, embrace the new economic opportunities found in the USA, and still maintain their African cultural identity (Hattar-Pollara, & Meleis, 1995). Despite the challenges they face in the acculturation process, the African women remain dependent on their husbands, even in their host countries (Arthur, 2009). African women are, thus, faced with challenges both from their cultural perspective and from their role as immigrants in a foreign country (Arthur, 2000).

Many of African immigrants continue to maintain strong relationships with their home country, forming entrepreneurial ties that facilitate the access of African crafts and other goods to sell in the USA (Stroller, 2002). This makes it easier to source the latest fabrics and textiles from back home (Africa) and use them to make their ethnic dress. For example, Yara African fabrics situated in New York City, is a retailer who sales exclusive and latest fabric and accessories sourced from Africa (Yara African Fabrics, 2017).

African Immigrant Women and Dress

African immigrant women living in the USA have a very strong cultural identity (Cordell, Garcia & Griega, n.d.; Ogbaa, 2003). In the process of assimilation, the African immigrant women tend to keep some aspects of their original culture with them (Arthur, 2000), including dress (Strübel, 2012). Research shows that even with a long history of immigration and positive integration into the USA culture, African women maintain prominent level of uniqueness with their ethnic identity, as seen in their use of traditional ethnic dress (Cordell, Garcia & Griega, n.d.; Ogbaa, 2003; Strübel, 2012). Ethnic and cultural identity include self-identification with the ethnic group, sense of belonging and commitment, and shared values and attitude towards the group (Phinney et al, 2001, p. 496). Individuals use dress to show their cultural identification (Phinney, 1990). They construct their cultural identity to represent who and what they are, to show their beliefs, individual histories and social relation (Strübel, 2012). Consumers have multiple identities depending on their societal roles, gender, ethnic, religious or racial roles.

Consumers also identify with groups, Tajfel & Turner (1986) developed the Social Identity Theory (SI Theory) to explain how individuals recognize their membership in a group. People achieve and maintain a social identity to boost their self-esteem within the group.

Individuals belong to social groups such as ethnic groups, where they explore various aspects of ethnicity that they use to form their self-concept and their social identity (Phinney, 1990).

Cultural clothing is often used as an item of identification within an ethnic group. The degree to which immigrants identify and adapt to their host culture depends on generation of the immigrant.

First and Second-Generation Immigrants. Technological and societal changes today have enabled people to move across cultures easily. This movement from one culture to another can create challenging situations among people as they try to cope with both cultures. To be able to adapt and change their cultural identity, individuals undergo cross cultural adaptation (Periyanayagam, 2007). Cross cultural adaption is a complex phenomenon that influences an immigrant's ethno-cultural identity, perception, attitudes, economic conditions, food and lifestyle choices, and communication (Atkinson, Morten & Sue, 1997). Cross cultural adaptation brings stress to individuals as they negotiate between holding on to their values, language customs, and choosing new cultures of the host country (Periyanayagam, 2007). During cross cultural adaptation, the host community influences the immigrant's culture and lifestyle in the process of accommodating them (Rohmann, Florack, & Piontkowski, 2006). How well the immigrants adapt and manage change within the host group is referred to as acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010, p 472).

Acculturation Process. Immigrants go through a process of acculturation as they adapt to their host country and culture. Acculturation is the process of cultural and psychological change that results following the meeting between cultures (Sam & Berry, 2010 p. 472), it is the degree of absorption into the dominant culture. It is a process whereby "an individual from one cultural grouping adapts to or borrows the beliefs or traits of another cultural group" (Webster

dictionary, 2017). Acculturation results into adaptation which is defined as ... “the individual psychological wellbeing and how individuals manage socioculturally” (Sam & Berry, 2010 p. 472). Permanence of the residence, personal attributes, the host country’s reception of immigrants and socio-economic conditions of the immigrants influence the degree of adaptation of immigrants to their host community (Berry, 1994).

People acculturate in two ways, (1) wishing to maintain their culture and identities, and (2) wishing to have contact with those outside the group and mingle with them in their daily life (Sam & Berry, 2010 p. 476). There are four acculturation strategies (see Table 2.1) that are based on acculturation attitudes of the individual, these are *assimilation*, *integration*, *separation* and *marginalization* (Berry, 1994; Sam & Berry, 2010). *Assimilation* occurs when individuals give up their native attitudes, beliefs, identity and embrace the traditions, values, and norms of the host culture. While *separation* occurs when individuals maintain their cultural identity and abstain from interacting with the host culture. The *integration* strategy is also the bicultural perspective whereby individuals who want to maintain their cultural identity as well as communicate and interact with the host community. *Marginalization* occurs when individuals loose interest in both their own cultural matters and the host society to participate in any of the cultures, they exclude themselves from both their culture and their host culture (see Table 1). These approaches are not permanent but dynamic, people can move from one strategy to another depending on the factors prevailing at a given time. Additionally, first and second-generation immigrants will typically acculturate differently (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Table 1. Berry's 1994 Acculturation Model

	High Identification with <i>Ethnic Culture</i>	Low Identification with <i>Ethnic Culture</i>
High identification with the <i>Host Culture</i>	Integration(Bicultural)	Assimilation
Low identification with the <i>Host Culture</i>	Separation	Marginalization

During acculturation, groups have a reciprocal influence over each other that results in unique experiences and outcomes (Sam & Berry, 2010). Each cultural group participates in a distinctive way to the extent that even individuals in the same cultural group will experience various levels of acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010). During acculturation, human life changes according to three perspectives; affective, behavioral and cognitive (Ward, 2001). These changes will be detailed in the following sections.

Affective Changes. Affective changes occur because of the major shift of the individual from one culture into a new culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). The challenges caused by this shift may result in stress for the immigrants, but factors such as age, gender and social support, moderate and mediate the acculturation experiences of individuals (Sam & Berry, 2010). Older immigrants, females and those without social support suffer higher acculturation stress (Berry, 2006b).

Behavioral Changes. To adapt into the new culture, behavioral changes occur and force immigrants to learn the new culture in a process known as the culture learning approach (Sam & Berry, 2010). For example, immigrants should learn the new language to effectively communicate and to adapt socio-culturally to the unfamiliar environment. Immigrants also learn

the behavior of the host, such as every day encounters, verbal and nonverbal cues, value and norms (Sam & Berry, 2010).

Cognitive Changes. Cognitive changes relate to the individual's thoughts about themselves and others as they immerse and negotiate into the new cultural environment. It is about, "how people process information about their own group (in group) and about other groups (out groups), including how people categorize one another and how people identify with these categories" (Sam & Berry, 2010, p. 475). Tajfel and Turner's (1986) theory of social identity is the start of the cognitive perspective of acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010). This theory assumes that a part of an individual's self-concept comes from the groups they belong to and that their sense of who they are depends on the groups to which they belong. Through the cognitive perspective, individuals and groups can define their identity in terms of ethnic identity (members of their ethnic group) or national identity (member of the larger society they are acculturation into) (Phinney, 2006).

First Generation Acculturation Process. Human capital, social environment and existence of a co-ethnic community are the three factors that affect the incorporation of the immigrants into the host culture (Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). An immigrant's personal characteristics such as their education, occupational competences and language skills are the human capital that influence their degree of acculturation (Sam & Berry, 2010). The more educated the immigrant is, the more likely they easily acculturate and succeed in the host country (Erik, 2014). Social environment encompasses the host government's policies and attitudes towards immigrants (Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). Human capital and the social environment of the host culture thus dictate the acculturation strategy that the migrant will adopt i.e. whether assimilation, integration, marginalization or separation (Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). The closer the

similarity between the host and the immigrant in terms of physical appearance, color of skin, language and religion the easier the integration and the assimilation process (Erik, 2014 p. 19).

The immigrant's ethnic group is the third factor that influences their acculturation process. Large and close-knit communities provide emotional and social support for new immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), therefore making the acculturation process less challenging. The second generation is greatly influenced by their family structure, and the family supports them during the process of acculturation and adaptation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). Therefore, the level of human capital, social environment and ethnic community support influences the process of assimilation of the second-generation immigrants (Portes & Rumbaut 2001).

Comparing the First and Second-Generation Acculturation Process. The first generation transmits culture to the second generation in three ways: consonant acculturation, dissonant acculturation and selective acculturation (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006). According to Portes and Rumbaut (2006), consonant acculturation occurs when both the first and second generation learn the host culture simultaneously, dissonant acculturation occurs when second generation immigrants learn the host culture faster than their parents (first generation). Selective acculturation occurs when the second generation are fluent in both their original culture and the host culture (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

Research on first and second-generation immigrants emphasizes how the generations experience acculturation differently. A study among the Salvadoran showed that the first-generation immigrants interacted in several ways with their culture, and they choose specific aspects of the culture to teach the second generation (Erik, 2014). The first generation's personal characteristics, history and socio-economic status influence how they transmit elements of

culture to their children who are the second generation (Erik, 2014). On the other hand, the second generation selected what to pick from their parent's culture and from their host culture as they went through the acculturation process (Erik, 2014; Yakushko, Watson & Thompson, 2008). First generation immigrants kept their culture and maintained their ethnic identity while second generation did not consider their parents' culture important and often selected what to keep (Yakushko et. al 2008).

It has also been found that there is significant group variance among second generation immigrants (Portes, & Rumbaut, 2005). Variance among the second generations may result due to language, race, culture and attitudes of the host culture (Erik, 2014; Portes, & Rumbaut, 2005). A host culture assumes that the immigrants from the same country are similar, but this often is not the case. Parents of second generation immigrants greatly influence their identity and individual development during the acculturation and adaptation process to their new host culture (Erik, 2014). For example, second generation children from African families will emphasize the collectivist approach and not the individualist approach to culture (Clark, 2008).

Immigrants from other parts of the world encounter variance in their adaptation process. For example, researchers have claimed that even as Haitian immigrants to the USA encounter cultural challenges, they keep their cultural identity through their fashion styles, music, entertainment, food, language, family life and social activities (Belizaire & Fuertes, 2011). As compared to first generation, the second-generation Haitian immigrants express their cultural identity in a comparable manner but with less attachment to their home country (Belizaire & Fuertes, 2011).

African Regions and Ethnic Dress

Africa is the world's second largest continent in area. The countries differ immensely geographically, politically, socially, economically, and culturally. The United Nations Statistic Division (UNSD) divides Africa into five regions, the Western Africa, East Africa, the Central or Middle Africa, the Northern and the Southern Africa. The total number of countries in all subdivision include 53 countries (see Table 2).

Table 2. Sub Regional Countries of Africa (UNSD, 2017)

African Sub Region	Countries
Northern Africa	Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Sudan, South Sudan, Tunisia, and Western Sahara
Central or Middle African	Angola, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo Republic - Brazzaville, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, and São Tomé & Príncipe
Southern Africa	Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, and Swaziland
Eastern African	Burundi, Comoros, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Réunion, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somalia, Somaliland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
Western African	Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte D'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Saint Helena, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo

African Textiles. African dress is made from textiles that have been considered African in nature. African textiles are often woven (Ross, 2007; Eicher, 2010; Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013) in single colors, more color can be added by printing, tie and dye, and/or use of resist methods such as batik (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013). Fabrication techniques of African textiles have had significant “cultural meaning about individual ethnic groups and people: ethnic origin, social standing, age, and marital status” (Strübel, 2012, p. 30). These textiles are 100% cotton,

with unique characteristics that give them distinctive designs, colors, yarn arrangement and yarn content and examples include *Aso-Oke*, *adire*, *ankara* (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013). The ‘*khanga*’ or *Kanga* word derived from old Bantu word (Kiswahili) verb meaning, ‘*kukanga*’ ‘to wrap or close’ (Ryan, 2012). It is made of 100% cotton, and is rectangular, measuring about 1.64 yards by 1.09 yards in size (see figure 3). It is having the border, the central part and writing or proverb for communication as Neal (2010) describes it:

A colorful garment worn by women and occasionally by men throughout East Africa. It is a piece of printed cotton fabric, about 1.5m by 1m, often with a border along all four sides and a central part which differs in design in the different countries. “*Khangas*” are usually very colorful and have proverbs inscribed on them. An equivalent of *Khanga* is the *kitenge* which is also made from cotton fabric and is sometimes used to make different fashions like skirts, shorts and trousers (p.1).



Figure 3. *Khanga* Fabric

The *khanga* are made of cotton and are often sold in pairs and are a relatively cheap form of clothing worn daily by most women in the East African coastal region (Ryan, 2012). The *kanga* is a simple but elegant body wrap that functions as a wardrobe item for African women. Folded, wrapped and tied, add a little imagination and you have a skirt, sundress, turban or toga.

What makes this textile unique is the message it communicates to the wearer and observer, which could either be a message of love, caution, a warning or an advice (Ryan, 2012). The textiles that are commonly used among West African population include: *Ankara*, *Adire*, *Aso-Oke* and *Akwete* among others (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013) as shown in Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7 respectively.

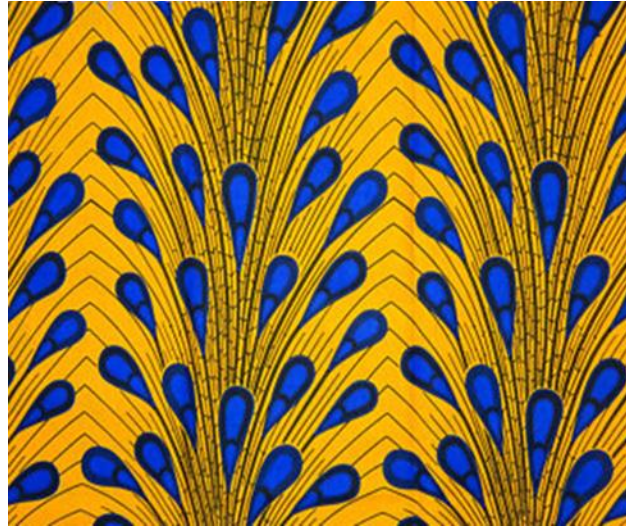


Figure 4. *Ankara* Fabric

Ankara fabric is intentionally referred to as the African fabric because it is the most commonly used fabric among Africans (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013). Among the east African population, the Ankara is often referred to as the kitenge fabric (Neal, 2010). It is an industrially printed cotton fabric that unlike the *Aso-Oke*, can be mass produced, printed to create unique motifs and patterns and is also cheaper to make (Olajide, Ajiboye & Joseph, 2009).

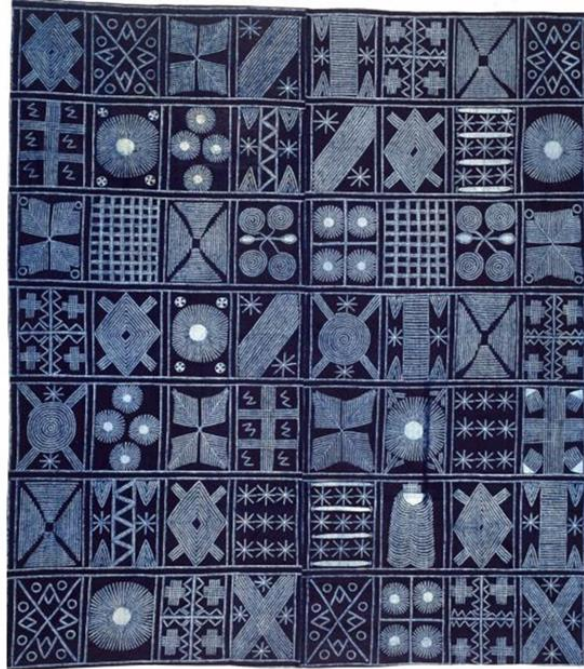


Figure 5. *Adire* Fabric

Adire is another textile that is common among Africans too. *Adi* means ‘tie and *re* means ‘dye’ among the Yoruba of West Africa. It is made of cotton fiber, but color and patterns are introduced through resisting dye, through tie and dye where fabric may be folded, tied before being dyed. The dyed fabric may then be finished by improving the sheen to make it more lustrous (Gausa & Abubakar, 2015). *Aso-Oke* remains the most esteemed cloth for celebration among the West African people (Areo & Areo, 2016) and it is usually given out as a gift to important guests. *Aso-Oke* is made by weaving using alternating colors of warp and weft thread and it is usually warp faced. The weaving produces strips that measures about 14-15 cm and several strips can be stitched together to create enough fabric for making a garment (Olajide, Ajiboye & Joseph, 2009).



Figure 6. *Aso-Oke* Fabric



Figure 7. *Akwete* Fabric

The *Kente* apparel is often worn on specific occasions such as festivals, weddings, and funerals (Adam, 2017). *Kente* is a woven cloth made by at least two sets of yarns where one yarn is interlaced over the other. Figure 8 shows *Kente* fabric and Figure 14 shows the *Kente* apparel. *Kente* is famous among the Ghanaians, it is a hand-woven fabric that is distinctly patterned, with

geometrical designs, bold designs and often comes in brilliant colors (Adam, 2017). The *kente* cloth is woven in an assortment of colors and each color has a unique meaning combined with a pattern (Adam, 2017). *Kente* is a strip of cotton fabric it can be printed, and mass produced or can be hand woven on a loom using two sets of yarn (dyed silk, cotton or other yarns) interlaced over each other. When finished it creates a strip that is about 4 inches in width and 144 inches in length (Badoe & Opoku-Asare, 2014). *Kente* may be weaved as single, double or triple where the more the yarns, the more complex the weave and the more expensive it is (Badoe & Opoku-Asare, 2014). The original *Kente* is woven while the printed *Kente* is an imitation.

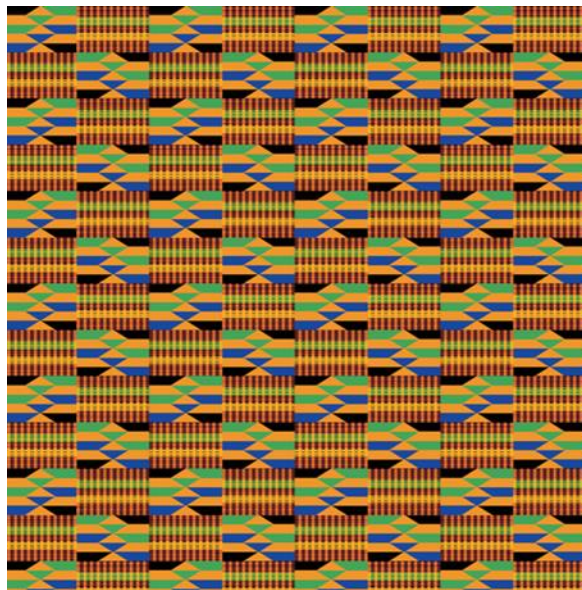


Figure 8. *Kente* Fabric

Ethnic Dress and its Meaning. Outside of Africa, the West African women have maintained important levels of identity with their traditional dress (Cordell, Garcia & Greiga, n.d; Ogbaa, 2003). They have a strong cultural identity even among the younger generation which is seen by their use of ethnic dress in diaspora (Strübel, 2012). Forney & Robalt (1986) define ethnic dress “as identification with and the wearing of clothing and/or accessories which symbolize an individual’s ethnicity” (p. 3). Use of traditional textile prints to create dress often

has significant meaning to Africans. African textiles are used as a form of art to express various symbolic meanings (Strübel, 2012). The textile motifs and print designs convey a metaphor, while colors may be associated with different meanings (Castonguay, 2009; Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013).) For example, the *Aso-Ebi* dress worn by Nigerians demonstrates unity within the social group and members of the group attending a special function. In such a case, the *Aso-Ebi* is made of a specific color or design to show solidarity (Castonguay, 2009). *Aso-Ebi may be* worn by guests in a wedding, funeral or any festival. *Aso-Ebi* comes from two Yoruba words: *Aso* meaning cloth and *Ebi* meaning family. It is a common cloth worn by family to celebrate an event. It continues to evolve in modern times and it is even more commonly found and used among African Nigerians in the diaspora (Areo & Areo, 2016). *Aso-Ebi* shows love, identification, solidarity and social bonding, in contrast if not worn may lead to conflict and unequal treatment in the celebration (Tade & Ayiebo, 2014). *Aso-Ebi* is the invitation card and wearing *Aso-Ebi* in an event results into special treatment (Areo & Areo, 2016).

Ethnic Dress across African Regions. Each sub region in Africa, has been influenced by the culture and the dominant religion of the sub region making ethnic dress to be unique across the African continent. Each of the regions has distinct characteristics, and thus, seemingly distinct cultures. In the Northern region are the Arab Africans, who are mostly Muslims. Their ethnic dress resembles dresses that are in the Middle East where women wear hijab and cover their bodies as shown in figure 9 below. (Neal, 2010).



Figure 9. North African Dress

North African countries practice Islam, which influences their culture (Williams & Vashi 2007). The population of North Africa is comprised of light skinned citizens reflecting the interaction of the people and immigrants from Greece, Italy and other parts of the European continent (Lawal, 2010). The weather fluctuates between hot and cold. During the chilly weather, both men and women wear long tunics, flowing robes and long trousers (Lawal, 2010). Women's dress also includes: henna dye, tattoo, and assorted jewelry, head scarves and turbans (Lawal, 2010). Women wear long attire to cover their body. In this culture women also wear head gear, the hijab that covers their faces (Williams & Vashi, 2007).

In East Africa, they have varied ethnic dress with the common one being the shuka known as the '*kitenge*' and '*khanga*'. Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia, Somali and Sudan Rwanda and Burundi make up the East African countries and have many cultures and ethnic groups(Neal, 2010). Ethnic dress has been influenced by the former colonizers (the British) and

thus, it is a little formal with a less pronounced African aesthetic (Neal, 2010). Along the coastal region, Arab and Muslim culture has further influenced dress (Neal, 2010). Among the Tanzanians, their ethnic dress is the '*khanga*' and '*kitenge*'.

Khanga are worn in ceremonies such as -weddings, wrapped around newborns and the dead (Ryan, 2012). Besides the *khanga* being used as daily wear for East African women today, it has become a fashion statement in the runway global scene (Ryan, 2012). Figure 10 shows apparel made using *khanga* fabric.



Figure 10. *Khanga* Dress

Uganda is another country in the Eastern region of Africa. The *gomesi* is the national dress of Ugandan women and it is a colorful floor length dress as seen in figure 11. The *gomesi* is defined as:

A brightly colored cloth dress with a square neckline and short, puffed sleeves. The dress is tied with a sash placed below the waist over the hips. The *gomesi* has two buttons on the left side of the neckline. Most *gomesi* are made of silk, cotton, or linen fabric, with silk being the most expensive. A *khanga* is tied underneath the linen *gomesi* to ensure that the fabric does not stick to the body. It can require up

to 6 meters of cloth for a well-fitting *gomesi*. The *gomesi* is mainly worn on special occasions such as funerals and weddings (Neal, 2010, p 1).



Figure 11. *Gomesi* Dress

The traditional formal wear of Rwandese women is called the *Mushanana* (singular) and *Mishanana* (plural) it is an elegant dress and looks similar to the Indian sari (Neal, 2010). The *Mushanana* consists of a long-lined skirt and a separate scarf. The skirt is wrapped and bunched at the hips and the scarf is draped over one shoulder. It is made with light weight fabric such as chiffon or silk to create a flowing effect (Neal, 2010). *Mishanana* are worn for formal occasions such as weddings, Figure 12 shows a *Mushinana* apparel commonly worn among the Rwandese of Eastern Africa.



Figure 12. *Mushinana Dress*

In Kenya the women do not have a formal traditional dress, but different ethnic groups within Kenya have their own clothing, which is worn during certain ceremonies (The Citizen, 2016). Different ethnic groups in Kenya such as, the Kikuyu, the Maasai, the Pokot and the Samburu's have designs that they wear for various occasions and adorn with beadwork. The red colored traditional dress of Kenyan Maasai and the beadwork worn has symbolic meaning, they show identity and position of the individual in society (The Citizen, 2016). Today most Kenyan women use the Maasai beaded neck dress to accessorize their apparel including the first lady. For example, figure 13 shows a wedding dress adorned with Maasai beadwork.



Figure 13. Kenyan Maasai Dress (Necklace)

The traditional dress of West African women is wrapped and draped on the body (Adelaja, Salusso & Black, 2016) and often accompanied with the *gele* a traditional head gear. The use traditional textiles that are colorful and made of 100% cotton to make their apparel (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013). For example, they use the Ankara fabric shown in Figure 15 to create attires that express family and group identity (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013). Ghanaians are known for using the *kente* fabric (figure 14), while the Nigerians mainly use the *Ankara* fabric (figure 15) to create their ethnic dress besides other fabrics.



Figure 14. *Ankara Dress*



Figure 15. *Kente dress*



Figure 16. *Aso-Ebi*



Figure 17. *Aso-Ebi*

The *Aso-Ebi* style is mainly used for celebrations that demand that the attendants wear dress that is made using fabrics that look alike as seen in figure 16 and 17 above (Castonguay, 2009).

Due to its novelty and versatility to produce many unique products such as bags, clothes, shoes, and accessories, many African consumers especially millennials, are beginning to customize their products using African textiles such as the *ankara* (Mbumbwa, 2016). Generally, there has been increased consumption of these textiles both in Africa and western parts of the world (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013; Mbumbwa, 2016). Among the people of Cameroon, the *kabba* is their traditional dress (Mokake, 2010). It is voluminous piece covering part of the body, looking more like the “pastor’s cassock” because it has been influenced by the missionaries is often worn with a head tie (Mokake, 2010).

South African region like most of the African regions, has a variety of cultures, ethnic groups and religious groups that influence their ethnic dress (Collison, 2017). Therefore, each group has its own ethnic dress. For example, the Khosa dress has beautiful beadwork made from printed fabric. Among this cultural group, the ethnic dress will differ according to stage of life of the individual (Collison, 2017).

African Headwear. To complete the dress, most African women would wear a head dress. The headdress may be made from varied materials or from similar fabric as the ethnic dress. Before colonialism, African women wore a headgear that had a symbolic meaning, and this was to show their status in the community e.g. marital status. After colonialism, most African women in the continent abandoned their head gear thinking that it was a sign of backwardness, but today women across the world including in the US are wearing the head gear (African Head Gear, 2016). The women have adapted the head gear as a cultural identity and as a beauty feature (African Head Gear, 2016). The common names for head gear across Africa are:

South Africa-*Doek*; Malawi/Zimbabwe-*Dhuku*; Ghana-*Duku*; Nigeria-*Gele*; Sudan-*Tarha*; Sierra Leone-*Enkeycha*; East Africa (Swahili)-*kilemba*; DR Congo (Lingala)-*Kitambala*; Rwanda/Burundi-*Igitambara*; Uganda-*Ekitambala* (Luganda)/ *Latam wich* (Acholi) and Zambia-*Chitambala* (African Head Gear, 2016).

Of most African women, the West African women wear elaborate headgear that is constructed from about two-yards of folded, crisp fabric formed into a towering headdress (Strübel, 2012). This headdress is referred to as the *gele*. To be elegant and impressive, the *gele* is made into an intricate and extravagant headgear using crisp *Aso-Oke* fabric. African immigrant women in the USA have turned the simple headdress - *gele* into a 'local fashion statement' (Strübel, 2012, p. 24) as seen in figure 18.



Figure 18. The *Gele*

Women and Ethnic Dress

Dress is an assemblage of modifications of the body and or supplements to the body (Eicher & Roach-Higgins, 1992, p. 6). Body modifications include transformations made to the body to enhance appearance such as to the hair, skin and nails. Body supplements are added to the body to enhance the appearance such as enclosures that are pre-shaped, wrapped, and suspended for example apparel (Eicher & Roach-Higgins, 1992, p. 6). Body supplements also include attachments that are clipped, inserted or adhered to the body such as earrings, ornaments among others (Eicher & Roach-Higgins, 1992, p. 6).

Apparel as a cultural artifact communicates messages about cultural identity and individuals use dress as material culture for cultural identification (Lawal, 2010). Cultural dress is used to communicate identity, personal and group values (Lawal, 2010). Among African women “cultural dress includes traditionally styled garments and accessories imported from various African countries, made up of fabrics and other materials constructed and finished in those countries, or replicas of such” (O’Neal, 1998b, p. 28). Symbolism attached to cultural dress such as the expressive elements, color, fabric, texture color pattern, volume and silhouette communicate cultural identity of a group. Consumers use ethnic dress to identify themselves with their heritage (MacDonald et al., 2009). Individuals with high ethnic identity, often use dress that reflects their identity (Forney & Rabolt, 1986).

Ethnic dress may be worn to communicate various information among ethnic groups and may be worn for special occasions. But within the same ethnic group, consumers would wear the western dress for every day (Eicher et al., 2008). This means that during daily activities people from various ethnic groups wear the western dress, but most would preserve their cultural dress for special occasions such as weddings, holiday celebrations or community events. For example,

the Japanese *kimono*, Vietnamese *aodai*, and the Chinese *qipao* are reserved for formal occasions (Eicher et al., 2008).

Research shows that use of ethnic dress is related to the level of assimilation or acculturation into the main culture and is used to signify the level of ethnicity of the wearer (Forney & Rabolt, 1986). Members of a group wear ethnic dress to differentiate themselves from the rest of the population. Similarly, as a visual sign of incorporating and assimilating into the new culture, many individuals will abandon their ethnic dress to avoid isolation from the majority culture (Forney & Rabolt, 1986).

But others will still wear their ethnic dress, for instance the African American women (with their long history of assimilation) wear their ethnic dress (O'Neal, 1998b). A study of African American women (Macdonald et al., 2009) found that the participants wore the ethnic dress because of several reasons such as fit, fashion style and color. Participants complained that the clothing available did not meet their apparel needs. Besides, the participants had fit problems especially at the rear end, hips and thighs. Also, they wore their cultural dress because it helped them identify with their African heritage. Motivation for wear the cultural dress include its comfortability, style and desire for ethnic identification (O'Neal, 1998b).

Nigerian women, considered functional, expressive and aesthetic characteristics in the choice of their apparel (Adelaja et al., 2016; Lamb & Kallal, 1992). Functional characteristics include; fit, comfort, ease of wear and trendiness; expressive characteristics include: modesty, cultural identity and self-esteem and suitability of the apparel for the occasion at hand; aesthetics: overall appeal, stylish, design details and texture characteristics, color combination, flattering and showing of body curves were more significant factors in their choice of apparel (Adelaja et al. 2016; Lamb & Kallal, 1992). Like the African American women, in MacDonald

et al., 2009 study, participants consider less exposure of body parts as modesty and more appealing to aesthetic characteristics. A combination of traditional African style and western style when designing their garment, and consideration of cultural norms for modesty and appropriate dress is significant for African Nigerian women (Adelaja et al., 2016). Body structure affects the fit of a garment, women would choose apparel that flatters their body (Adelaja et al., 2016).

African Women, Body and Ethnic Dress

Generally, women have experienced difficulties in their choice of clothing due to proportions of their specific body parts (Apeagyai, 2008). Bust, hips, waist and buttocks influenced garment style choices because consumers wanted to wear garments to create an illusion such as to make them look slimmer or taller than their normal size. In a study by Apeagyai (2008), consumers were conscious of garment fitting issues, 77 % reporting problems and dissatisfaction with their fit at the waist, hips, bust, and height of the garment. Body structure and body shape differ among ethnicities (Grabe & Hyde, 2006). Research shows that African women have larger waists, hips and thighs as compared to Caucasian and Asian women (MacDonald, Lazorchak & Currie, 2009; Shin & Istook 2007). Their body shape makes African women experience fit problems with this area (MacDonald et al., 2009; Mastamet-Mason, De Klerk, & Ashdown, 2012; Shin, & Istook, 2007). African American women have heavy bottoms, this make it difficult to get well fitting apparel that is made using standard body measurements, thus they have reported dissatisfaction with available clothing (Shin & Istook, 2007). Within the same figure type group, size ranges vary, and consumers are unable to find the right fit of apparel for themselves (Shin & Istook, 2007). This may result because individuals may differ in

proportion of the body parts that are not considered during sizing and standard body measurement development.

In a study of the unique African female body shapes, Mastamet-Mason et al., (2012) found that the body shape differed from both the Western ideal and Western rectangular shape. In comparison, the Western rectangular body has a strong ribcage, upper hip tapering a little toward the waist or not tapering, shoulder width similar to hip width with very little indentation (Rasband & Liechty, 2006). African female body shape has a shoulder width similar to their hip width, a small waist indentation of less than 9 inches, thighs bulging to the side beyond the hip width and the hips are full at the crotch (Mastamet-Mason et al., 2012). African women are likely to have fit problems because ready-to-wear apparel is made using the Western ideal (i.e. hourglass) body shapes (Zwane & Magagula, 2006; Shin & Istook, 2007). In addition to fit, consumers consider several other factors in their choice of apparel.

A study on African women in the UK found that participants had a high degree of connection and attraction to the clothing from their home country (Gbadamosi, 2012). African immigrant women bought clothes associated with their culture and wore them during social functions (Gbadamosi, 2012) and various contexts such as weddings, religious ceremonies and ethnic parties (Strübel, 2012). Wearing of their ethnic dress to events often served as a form of social identity and belonging (Adelaja et al, 2016; Gbadamosi, 2012; Strübel, 2012).

African immigrant women often design and customize their ethnic dress with the help of a dressmaker (Anikweze, 2012), with most of these consumers preferring elaborately colored African fabric designs (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013). In the process of designing, the women choose fabric, trimmings, findings and style to help create their desired styles (see Figure 2.3). How they choose and use the materials to create their preferred styles depends on their level of

acculturation and adaptation in the host country. Studies show that identity and adaptation is moderated by the generation of the immigrant (Phinney et al., 2001).

Apparel Design Process

Apparel Designers use the elements and principles of design to create apparel that consumers can wear and that meets their needs. These elements and principles of design appeal and motivate consumers to buy the apparel. Consumers have different motivations for apparel consumption that may include, superior quality (Brown & Rice, 2012), self-expression (Lamb & Kallal, 1992), social identity (Apaegyai, 2008; MacDonald et. al, 2009), construction and presenting of the desired self (Tawfiq & Ogle, 2013), and also various emotional needs (Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013). Consumers may have one or more of the above motivations when consuming apparel.

Consumers may purchase and use apparel because of reasons such as: fit, comfort, price, quality and durability (Brown & Rice, 2012). Other factors on which consumers base their decision making are body factors such as body size, body shape, skin color, hair texture, eye color, among others (MacDonald et al., 2009). A survey of consumer clothing purchase decisions done in the USA from January to May 2012 showed that 75% of consumers considered fit to be more important in their choice of apparel, followed by comfort 70%, price 60%, quality 51% and durability 49%. Women paid more attention to fit, price, color style softness and care as compared to men (Cotton Incorporated, 2013 in Brown & Rice, 2012)). Consumers also consider: functional values such as fit, comfort and protection, and aesthetic values such as color, style, fabric, quality; and symbolic or expressive values such as fashion, identity self-esteem, in their choice of apparel (Lamb & Kallal, 1992; MacDonald et al., 2009).

Different scholars have identified some of the factors to consider when designing apparel. For example, Lamb and Kallal (1992), identified three considerations that designers should deliberate when creating products for people as: functional, aesthetic and expressive: while Norman (2005) also identified three factors (as visceral, behavioral and reflective) to consider when designing products. When considering Norman (2005) it is possible to extend his design factors to include apparel.

Functional Expressive Aesthetic (FEA) Model of Consumer Needs. According to Lamb & Kallal (1992) when designing apparel, the functional, aesthetic and expressive aspects need to be incorporated to meet specific consumer needs. They developed the Functional, Expressive and Aesthetic (FEA) Consumer Needs Model in 1992. The model assumes that individuals have needs that must be catered to and that the needs are influenced by an individual's cultural settings. When design meets what the consumer wants and needs, then the consumer may consume the product.

Functional needs refer to the utility of apparel, which can include protection, thermal comfort, fit and ease of movement (Lamb & Kallal, 1992). Functional needs are very important when designing for various consumers (An & lee 2015; Stokes & Black, 2012). In a study to identify the functional needs of consumers, An & Lee (2015) found that Asian women desired design features that met functional characteristics such as comfort, protection, mobility, radiance and donning/doffing (p. 211). The consumers identified the functional needs of protection and ease of movement to be most important to them when designing apparel (An & Lee, 2015).

Expressive characteristics are the symbolic meanings of the apparel or what the consumer wants to communicate with the apparel (Lamb & Kallal, 1992). Consumers from collectivist societies will pay attention to design that is in line with their culture (An & Lee, 2015). They

dress according to age and gender, unlike individuals from individualistic societies who are more casual in their choice of apparel and dress according to their lifestyle (An & Lee, 2015). Women from Asian countries tend to express their social values, social roles, and social status through their choice of dress while still maintaining the fashion trend of the season (An & Lee, 2015). Individuals also communicate different symbolic meanings through dress (Damhorst, 1990) such as cultural meanings, individuality of the wearer, self-identity and group identity (Lamb & Kallal 1992; MacDonald et al., 2009; Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992).

Aesthetic needs include the desire for beauty in an apparel product and are manifested through elements of design such as line, form, color, texture and pattern in relation to the body (Lamb & Kallal 1992). Aesthetics also include visual design that enhances body image (Lamb & Kallal, 1992). During the design process, elements and principles of design are used as guideline to help the designer create harmony between, the garment structure, the visual appeal and the ease of use by the user (Lamb & Kallal, 1992).

Consideration of culture results into unique products that are designed explicitly to meet specific cultural needs of selected consumers. Traditions and values are expressed through designing material culture (Serrano, Gonzales, Wilkinson & Reeves-De Armond, 2016). Culture acts as a filter between the user and the requirements needed to be included in the user's apparel products (Lamb & Kallal, 1992 p. 43). Designing objects while incorporating culture increases the cultural value and the product value of the object (Hsu, Chang & Lin, 2012). Therefore, apparel designers have to consider culture when identifying the consumer needs. Each culture has unique standards of beauty and aesthetics that are dynamic (Kaiser, 1990).

2.7.2 Norman's Levels of Design. Norman (2005) identifies three levels of design, every product can be evaluated at these levels. The three levels are visceral, behavioral and reflective,

and a superior design should pass all three levels of evaluation. The visceral level is based on physical appearance and beauty of design; behavioral is often the functionality of the product such as the ease or difficulty of using it. While the reflective level refers to the message the product communicates to the user and viewers, and self-image experiences and remembrances the user experiences when using the product.

According to Norman (2005), the visceral level is derived from the emotional responses of the consumer and it is driven by the senses. The visceral perspective is natural, causes emotional responses that are subconscious, but consistent and globally accepted. For example, a product that is attractive to look at or smells good accomplishes the visceral level of design. At the behavioral level individuals will choose a design depending on its usage, their personal experience and the product's function. Designing at this level requires a user centered method that can focus on understanding and satisfying user needs (Norman, 2005).

The reflective level of design relates to the message the design sends to observers, and how the user wants to be perceived. It may include the symbolic meaning of the product to the user (Norman, 2005). What consumers feel and perceive from use of the product may influence their loyalty to it. The experience, if positive, may lead to satisfaction and future reuse. Good reflective reactions to a design is infused through good relationship between the product, the designer and the user. Great experiences with the product results in memories that are good for the consumer, thus resulting in positive word of mouth (Norman, 2005).

Oftentimes designers may not accurately conceptualize the consumers' needs and culture, therefore a design process that includes the consumer participating in the process is ideal (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). Useful design should meet the needs of a consumer in the product (Lamb & Kallal, 1992; Norman, 2005). Consumers collaborating with designers may result in

consumers having their needs met by the Product (Fletcher, 2012; Sanders & Stapper, 2008). It is the consumer who understands the purpose for obtaining the product and the needs that they expect to meet during consumption. For example, in the co-design process, the consumer will communicate their needs to the designer, and together with the designer, they create a product that can meet the consumer's desire (Sanders & Stappers, 2008). In the co-design process, an individual may be satisfied if the item they are designing meets the intended function; fit, comfort, expressive needs; emotional satisfaction, and aesthetic needs; beauty and style (Lamb & Kallal, 1992). And similarly, if it meets their visceral; emotional satisfaction, behavioral (functional) and expressive needs (aesthetic) (Norman, 2005).

Co-Designing

The design process has changed over the past few decades, resulting in more people getting involved in the process (Sanders & Stappers, 2014). In the early 80's, "designers explored how to design for the client. By 2014, the need for designers to design with client and not for client grew to a higher level, and it is expected that by 2044, the designing process adopted by the consumer will be one that empowers them to create their own designs" (Sanders & Stappers, 2014, p. 31). Therefore, with time the consumers are becoming more proactive in the design process by having their needs incorporated in their desired products. Co-design is an example of co-creation (Frow, et al., 2015; Payne, Storbacka & Frow, 2008; Sanders & Stappers, 2008), and thus, co-creation is a wider term that can be defined as "any act of collective creativity, i.e. creativity that is shared by two or more people" (Sanders & Stappers, 2008, p. 6). Co-creation involves a joint problem identification and solution to customer needs (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2009).

Co-design as a collaborative process, involves the designers collectively creating designs while working as a group with the consumer, to explore, define the problem and come up with solutions to solve the problem (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2009; Sanders & Stappers, 2008; Steen, 2013). An advantage of co-design is that it leads to monetary value for firms, and experience and social value for consumers (Sanders & Stappers, 2014). Firms are able to work with consumers to create products that meet their needs resulting in profits from sold goods and services, while the consumers enjoy the interaction with designers and the design process, thus obtaining experience value and social value (Sanders & Stappers, 2014).

Co-Designing Apparel. In the apparel co-design process, consumers who need apparel to meet their specific needs use a designer and work together to meet their goals. In the later stages of product development, co-designing has been used to improve customer participation, for instance, the Nike Company's websites www.NIKEiD.com allows clients to customize their shoes, and they can choose details such as colors (Sanders & Stappers, 2008) to create their desired style. Other companies using the same technique include; Eshitaki, American eagle. Today co-creation is used as a trend for marketing and brand positioning and has implications for sustainability.

Co-design involves the collaborative creation of products with the people who will use them (Fletcher & Grose, 2012; p144). This design process has the objective of creating product value and meaning of value to the consumer through personalized experiences, rather than the tangible product (Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2009). Consumers are the active participants in this creation process and they bring experiences and memories that enhance the perceived value of the product (Fletcher & Grose, 2012). Co-design results in positive relationship between product and users (Steen et al., 2011). Co-design also encourages consumers to be more inventive by

engaging their imagination and creativity (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015; Manschot & Koning, 2011).

Co-design, benefits customers, designers, and improves the creative process (Steen et al., 2011). In their study of service design, Steen et al. (2011) identified three benefits of co-design, improved creative process when designing the project, better fit between the services offered and customer needs, which leads to great customer experience and satisfaction, and finally cooperation among participants with more focus on the consumer. In co-designing, user needs, and experiences are incorporated into products resulting in high quality products, high consumer satisfaction and loyalty and lower cost of production (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015; Steen et al., 2011).

Co-design leads to higher customer satisfaction and better-quality products (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015) because it leads to intended products that meet consumer preference, tastes, and lifestyles (Engel-Enright, 2016). In the apparel industry, co-design allows a customer to choose from a combination of garment styles, colors, fabrics and the product or garment can be constructed to an individual size (Kamali & Locker, 2002). This process also produces individualized and unique apparel ((Niinimäki, 2011). Co-designing as an emerging design strategy results in a sustainable production and consumption of textiles and clothing ((Niinimäki & Hassi, 2011), enhances customer experience and commitment (Niinimäki, 2015).

Sustainability is the ability of something to be maintained or to sustain and it involves using what we need now without threatening the future generations potential of getting their needs (Scott, 2013). The Oxford English Dictionary defines *sustainable* as "capable of being upheld; maintainable," and to sustain as "to keep a person, community etc. from failing or giving way; to keep in being, to maintain at the proper level; to support life in; to support life, nature

etc. with needs." In the 1980s, the Brundtland Commission, a UN investigative body, defined sustainability as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Brundtland, 1987, p.16). Gradually our lifestyle is placing more and more pressure on natural systems. Sustainability has a major objective to reduce consumption of non-renewable resources, minimize waste and create healthy productive environments (Brundtland, 1987). It is about reducing expenses like those caused by poorly developed designed products and increasing the lifespan of products.

In the fashion industry sustainability can be attained by slowing down the lifecycle of clothes, this can be achieved through products that meet emotional needs of the consumer and by providing products that connect the consumer to their emotion (Chapman, 2009). Lawless & Medvedev (2016) found that the fashion industry does not support sustainability. There is need for a major change among consumers and the fashion industry through developing creative solutions in garment production and consumption (Lawless & Medvedev, 2016). Creative ways could be to incorporate strategies that encourage emotional attachment such as co-designing with the consumer, because co-designing creates memories and attachment that may delay clothing disposal. Consumers are motivated to engage in co-design because of the benefits they may receive from the process.

Motivations for Co-Design. Co-design disrupts the traditional fashion hierarchies (where power is given to the top elite designers, who make decisions about design direction, finish, fabric, and costs) by giving that power to consumers (Fletcher & Grose, 2011). Steen, et al., (2011) argued that co-design benefits customers and improves the creative process. Co-design also leads to emotional attachment to the designed object (Chapman 2009; Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013) and increases customer satisfaction (Niinimäki & Hassi, 2011).

Co-Design and Emotional Needs. Consumer emotional needs are likely to be met through their engagement in the co-design of their products (An & Lee, 2015). Niinimäki and Armstrong (2013) observed that memories and enjoyment during the design process contributes to product attachment. Such memories and enjoyment can create emotional satisfaction for the consumer and if the consumer's emotional design needs are met, they become emotionally satisfied (An & Lee, 2015). Thus, products with an emotional connection have a longer life span because the user sees the product to be valuable due to the existing emotional relationship (Chapman, 2009; Lobos & Babbitt, 2013). Consumers feel attached to garments because of their visually appealing beauty, and pleasant memories. The beauty of a garment entails feeling of comfort, weight of the fabric, and pleasant touch and odor (Niinimäki, 2011a).

Consumer Satisfaction. In co-design consumers are involved in the process and their needs are met and this leads to satisfaction (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015). Consumers often find ready-to-wear clothes that are produced by fashion apparel companies to be similar in style and design, which limits their creativity (McGrath, 2012). These mass-produced items make consumers less satisfied, in particular the fit of ready to wear clothing is a point of dissatisfaction. Participation of the consumer who is the end user in the design process can result in fulfillment and attachment with the product (Niinimäki, & Hassi, 2011). Product satisfaction and product attachment may delay and reduce consumer consumption (Niinimäki, 2011). The stronger the bond, the more likely that the consumer will delay the purchase of newer products, thus, slowing down of the product life cycle. Co-design also leads to a better fitting garment compared to the standard ready-to-wear items (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015).

Emotional Attachment. With consumer needs and design strategies changing, a strong consumer product relationship will extend life span of products (Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013)

and lead to satisfaction. When consumers add value through designing products they want, they are likely to form special relationship and attachment with them (Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013). The deeper special relationship may be because of emotional connection. Emotional connection is a point in which an individual and object of consumption form a relationship bond that elicits emotion and feelings (Chapman, 2009). The object is usually special to them and may become part of their extended self (Belk, 1988). This results into personal experience and symbolic meaning of consumption with the object, diligent care and delayed disposal of the product (Belk, 1988). Personal values, emotional values, memories, associations, and self-construction of the consumers to create attachment with various consumption products (Niinimäki, 2011a).

Niinimäki, & Koskinen (2011), revealed that consumers who had emotional relationship with their products, cared and often repaired their valuable apparel. The more a person interacts and connects with this object knowingly or unknowingly especially with the sensory /aesthetic cognitive behavioral and personal symbolic qualities of it, the deeper the attachment (Chapman, 2009). The Design and Emotion Society argues that the point at which the subject and object meet is important in designing emotionally meaningful products.

Norman (2005) noted that emotional needs determine how a designer should balance the appearance, usability, and personal satisfaction of design. Since it is difficult to identify emotions related to product attributes, designers can incorporate emotional attributes of a product based on consumers' point of views and feelings (Huang, Chen, Wang, & Khoo, 2014). This can thus lead to product satisfaction. Co-design also leads to higher customer satisfaction and better-quality products (Fletcher, 2011) and thus should be encouraged among consumers and designers. Outcomes of co-creation include; increased product value, customer experiences, consumer satisfaction and learning (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015 p.147).

The Designer's Role in Co-Design. A designer is an individual who has skills and knowledge in production of objects of consumption (Fletcher, 2012; Fletcher & Grose, 2011). The designer has technical and practical skills that they can use to co-design. In this process the designer acts as an educator, facilitator, activist and entrepreneur to transform the fashion design process (Fletcher & Grose, 2011). As a facilitator, the designer plays a significant role by helping the consumer to design and make garments for their own consumption.

The Co-design process helps consumers to be emotionally connected to the created object. The interaction of product, user and designer in the design process may lead to products that not only fulfill the needs, moods, preferences and the attitudes of the consumer but also may affect the emotions of the consumer (Norman, 2005). The designer balances the three aspects of design - appearance, usability and personal satisfaction in order to meet consumer emotional needs (Chapman, 2009).

Co-designing process helps consumer to move from a passive consumer to an active consumer, by taking responsibility and interacting with the product. The designer helps the consumer to begin a journey where they engage emotionally, practically and politically with their newly designed garments (Fletcher & Grose, 2011). Palomo-Lovinski & Hahn (2014) found that 87% of the designers agreed that co-design encouraged creativity and innovativeness among consumers, although it is not encouraged in the fashion industry, as it is likely to shake the industry by empowering the consumer who is supposed to be the receiver at the end of the supply chain (Lawless & Medvedev, 2016). The unsustainable industry practices in the sourcing, distribution methods and retail practices that are done by the stakeholders in this industry (designers, consumers and manufacturer can be disrupted by co-designing besides, co-design has implications for sustainability. It is important that change must occur for stakeholders to

encourage and sustain practices that will inspire co-designing. For this to happen, the consumer also has a key role to play in co-designing.

Role of Consumer in Co-Designing. Consumers are the individuals who use products to meet their needs and wants, they are the end users and the experts of their wants and needs (Sanders & Stappers, 2014). Humans are creative beings and design strategies that motivate their innovativeness in apparel design should be encouraged. Consumers' use of products that meet their needs can encourage them to participate in the creation of these products (Palomo-Lovinski & Hahn, 2014). The consumer plays a key role in co-design because of their physical, social and cultural input, which are needed for the process to be successful (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015, p. 151).

Collaborative Customization

Collaborative customization is aimed at producing and manufacturing products that meet the customer's needs and specification. Gilmore & Pin (1997) identified four approaches to customization of product during co-designing items as: collaborative, adaptive, cosmetic, and transparent. These four approaches give insights into how to best serve the customers. Collaborative customization involves a conversation with the individual customer in order to understand their needs, identify how to fulfill those needs and make a customized product for them (Gilmore & Pine, 1997; Klein et al., 2014). Adaptive customization occurs when one product is offered, but clients can customize and alter the product themselves to meet their needs. Cosmetic customization occurs when a standard product is presented differently to diverse customers (Gilmore & Pine, 1997). Cosmetic customization often produces the same product but packaged and presented differently for each customer. A t-shirt that has the customer's name monogrammed on it, is an example of cosmetic customization. Transparent customization provides

customers with unique products specifically made for them without the customer's knowledge (Gilmore & Pine, 1997). In this case, customers' needs are identified without direct interaction with them, this could be the case for ready to wear apparel.

Collaborative customization occurs mainly at the design stage of product development (Gilmore & Pine, 1997). For example, collaborative customization has worked perfectly in the shoe industry. Instead of customer's trying on several pairs of shoes to find their size, the customer's foot measurements are taken to ensure a perfect fit, this occurs as the consumer is engaged in a face to face conversation with the sales person. The sales-person helps the consumer to choose from diverse designs elements for the final specification of the pair of shoes. The shoes are custom made specifically for that consumer (Gilmore & Pine, 1997). This is like the designing of African ethnic dress where consumer decides on the style of dress they want.

African immigrant women often collaboratively design and customize their ethnic dress with the help of a dressmaker to create custom-made apparel (Anikweze, 2012). Most of these consumers prefer elaborately colored, traditional African fabric designs (Barret, 2008). African immigrant women create their desired styles by helping in the choice of fabric, trim, findings and style, thus, these women collaborate in designing the dress. The African ethnic dress is usually made-to-measure, or custom made (Anikweze, 2012). Just like in the collaborative customization of customized shoes, measurements are taken, and the customer chooses fabrics, some notions and the style they desire for their ethnic dress. Meanwhile communication occurs between the tailor and the customer to make sure the tailor understands the customers' needs and incorporates those needs in the design.

Ross (2007), studied made-to-measure apparel among consumers and found that there were many growing retailers that were doing this because of consumer high demand for high

quality fabrics, creative use of color and patterns and distinctive styles created through this method of design. Made-to-measure garments are having a high degree of individuality and reflect the personality of the consumer (Ross, 2007). Today's modern design technology includes 3-D body scanning and CAD patternmaking can lead into new forms of design and construction (Ross, 2007) which can result in more made-to-measure garments. Made to measure can result in quality, individualized styles and fit for customers (Ross, 2007).

Theoretical Framework

To explore the motivations for African immigrant women to create and consume their collaboratively customized ethnic dress, Means-End Chain (MEC) theory was used. This theory assumes that consumers use means (products) to achieve ends (states of being) (Gutman, 1982). Means-End Chain theory identifies the attributes of a product that motivates consumer use, the consequences of using the product and the underlying values of using the product (Reynold & Gutman, 1988). Consumers first identify attributes of products based on the perceived functional and psychological benefits or risks of the product and consider the consequences of their choices before selecting the product (Reynold & Gutman, 1988). The objective of this process is for consumers to satisfy their underlying self-values (Reynold & Gutman, 1988) through consumption of the product. Means-End Chain theory assumes that a consumer's decision to consume a product is a problem-solving action that aims to reap the benefits and avoid the negative results that may arise from the product consumption ((Reynold & Olson, 2001).

Using Means-End Chain theory will aid in understanding the motivations and values that are associated with the consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among African immigrant women in the USA. This theory will aid in identifying the attributes of the apparel, the emotional and psychological benefits, and the underlying values associated with consumption

of the co-designed ethnic dress. Gutman (1982) proposes that consumers have three levels of knowledge about a product: (a) attributes of the product A, (b) the consequences or results of using the product C, and (c) the ultimate goals or values V that may be satisfied by use of the product forming the A-C-V chain. The three levels form a hierarchical chain of association referred to as Means-End Chain because consumers see the product as a means to an end ((Reynold & Olson, 2001).

The goal of consumption is the desired end, achieved through a consumer's satisfaction with the product (Reynold & Olson, 2001). Gutman's (1982) Means-End Chain (MEC) theory states that consumers are motivated to perform an act because of the attributes of the product (means) and the resulting state of being (ends). This model explores the connection between consumer and product by creating a simple associative network between concrete levels of meaning (product characteristics) and abstract meaning (values) ((Reynold & Olson, 2001). The means-end approach assumes that product attributes are associated with consequences (which includes product benefits and risks) and they only have meaning and value to a consumer if they bring about the desired consequences ((Reynold & Olson, 2001).

For example, a consumer will buy a Louis Vuitton handbag for reasons such as; beauty brand name, beauty, and quality. With more probing for the consumer to give more reasons they may say brand name shows affluence, increases their self-esteem and uniqueness. When asked why these reasons are important to them, they may say it is because of their self-image. These factors can then be grouped as Attributes, Consequences and values. Attributes (brand name, Quality, beauty) lead to Consequence; (affluence, self-esteem, uniqueness) and consequences lead to the underlying values (self-image). This therefore forms the A-C-V chain. The consumers underlying value of consuming the Louis Vuitton bag is because of their self-image (see Table

2.3 below). This model also assumes that a consumer makes decisions about consumption by engaging in actions that will result in positive rather than negative outcomes (Reynold & Olson, 2001).

The final goal of the means-end chain is the value the consumer desires to achieve from consumption. This results in a value chain that links the product attributes to its functional and psychosocial consequences and to the underlying personal value resulting into an 'Attitude-Consequence-Value (A-C-V) model. The A-C-V model can be enlarged to preserve its distinctiveness of the order and the relationship among the elements. While the basic A-C-V divides the means-end hierarchy in just three levels, its elaborate version uses six levels; attributes are divided into concrete (CA) and abstract (AA); consequences into functional (FC) and psychological (PC); and values into instrumental (IV) and terminal (TV) (Reynolds & Gutman, 1984; Walker & Olson, 1991) as shown in figure 19 below. Olson and Reynolds (1983) describe the alternative six-level chain model. The six-model end chain model...

'connects the tangible, concrete attributes of a product to highly abstract and intangible personal and emotional values (goals or needs) through a chain of increasingly relevant abstract outcomes that also become increasingly personal, emotional, motivational and self-relevant' (Olson & Reynolds, 2001, p. 14).

Means end chain MEC theory indicates that personally relevant factors motivate consumer preferences for products. The factors exist at various levels ranging from basic functional attributes to personal psychosocial benefits and to highly personal, subjective life goals (Olson & Reynolds, 2001). Compared to values, which are the most abstract factor, attributes are tangible and concrete while consequences lie in between (Reynolds, Dethloff & Westberg, 2001).

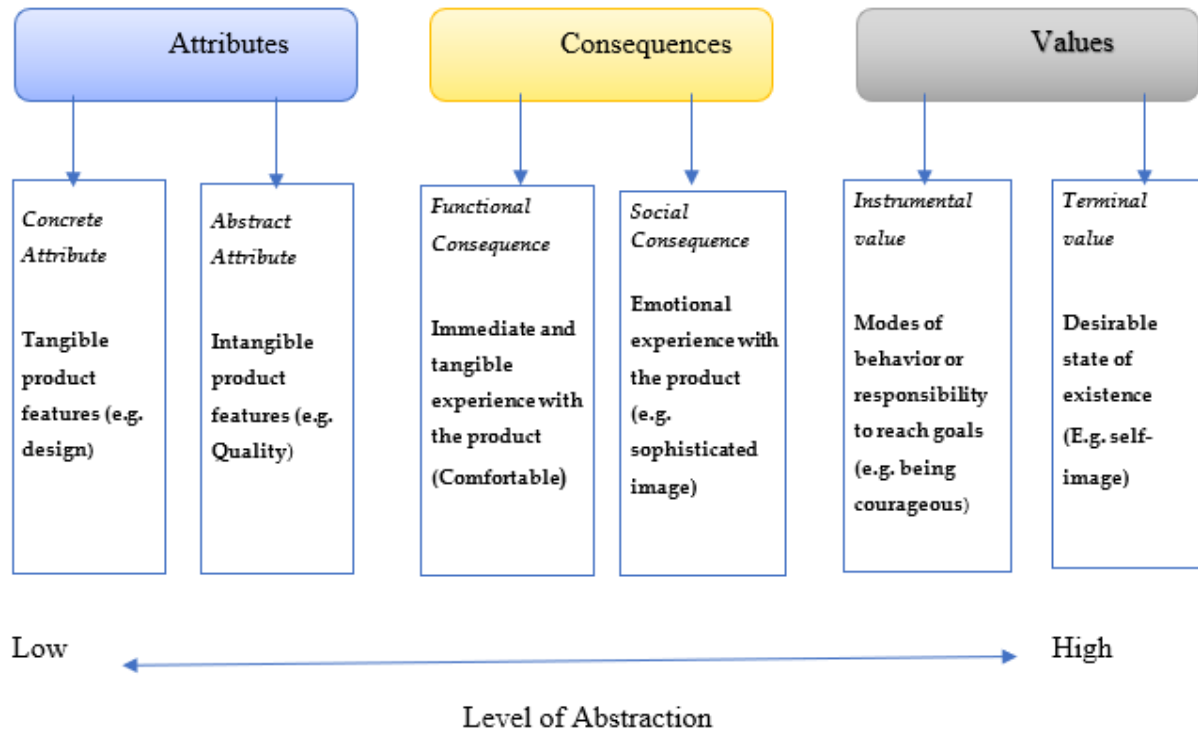


Figure 19. Gutman's (1982) Means-End-Chain Theory (Thompson & Ling Chen, 1998)

The Means-End Chain theory can clearly explain how consumption and engagement in collaborative customized designed apparel is linked to an individual's values. An individual will consume a collaboratively customized designed apparel product because of the values they perceive to receive from the apparel product. Product attributes of collaboratively customized items can motivate a consumer to co-design. This theory can be used to understand consumer behavior, motivations for engaging in the collaborative customization process, consumption of the customized apparel, product attributes, benefits and values obtained from consuming it.

Attributes of Apparel. Attributes are perceived qualities or features of products. They can be concrete or abstract (Reynolds et al., 2001) and may include quality, durability, value for money, aesthetics, style, color, fabric, construction. Customization results into high quality products that can have a mix of both modern and traditional details, color and versatility that appeal to the consumer (Engel-Enright, 2016).

Functional and Psychosocial Consequences. Consequences result from the attributes or benefits of a product. Consequences are personal outcomes that come about during consumption and usage of a product. They are functional or psychosocial (Reynolds et al., 2001). Functional consequences are instant, tangible physical experiences; while psychosocial consequences are emotional, social, and symbolic (Reynolds et al., 2001). Consequences satisfy the consumer and may include feelings of satisfaction that arise when consumers interact with other consumers during consumption. When values and goals are accomplished then consequences satisfy the consumer. Consequences related to apparel may include good fit and comfort.

Values or Goals. Values are the beliefs that people hold about themselves and are represented as goals that direct their drives and motivations (Reynold & Olson, 2001). Values are often related to ethnicity and culture (Phinney, 1992). Consumers are motivated to buy and use apparel due to the values they perceive to get from them (Forney Rabolt, & Friend, 1993; Gbadamosi 2012), and will spend more money on apparel that give them high aesthetic value (Chattaraman & Rudd, 2006). The collaboratively customization processes encourage collaboration between the user and the designer. The user incorporates their values into the product that will most likely lead to greater consumer satisfaction (Niinimäki & Hassi, 2011). The value created in the product results in fulfillment for the user and attachment develops between the end product and the consumer (Niinimäki & Hassi 2011).

The review of literature identified several themes related to the study. It also revealed that first and second-generation immigrants have differences in their cultural identity. The theoretical framework was discussed. Studies have been done on African women and dress, but little has been done on the specific motivations for the consumption of collaboratively customized dress.

Exploring this phenomenon will add literature to ethnic dress, immigrants and first and second-generation immigrant and dress consumption.

CHAPTER 3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivations for designing ethnic dress through collaborative customization among African immigrant women. The research sought to investigate and examine the motivations for consumption of ethnic dress, the attributes and functional and psychological benefits, and the underlying values of consumption of the collaborative customized ethnic dress. The study also explored the different perspectives between motivations for first and second generation African immigrant women living in the US. In this chapter the following topics are discussed: qualitative paradigm, researcher's role, sampling, and data collection and data analysis procedures. Credibility and dependability are also discussed.

The main research question was: "What are the motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among African immigrant women living in the USA?" This study also sought to answer the following research questions that stemmed from the main research question:

1. What types of ethnic dress do African immigrant women collaboratively custom design?
2. What motivates African immigrant women in the USA to collaboratively customize their ethnic dress?
3. What attributes, consequences (functional and psychological benefits) and values do African immigrant women get from collaboratively custom ethnic dress?
4. What motivates African immigrant women to wear their ethnic dress?
5. Are there differences between the motivations of first generation and second-generation African immigrant women?

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To identify ethnic apparel that were collaboratively customized by African immigrant women.
2. To understand reasons that motivated African immigrant women to collaboratively customize ethnic dress.
3. To identify differences in motivations for the creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress between first and second generation African immigrant women.
4. To examine the attributes, benefits, consequences, and values of creating and collaboratively customized ethnic dress using MEC theory.

To achieve these objectives, the Means-End Chain (MEC) theory was used as the theoretical framework. A qualitative research design was used to collect data to answer the above research questions.

Qualitative Research

The purpose of qualitative research is to understand a phenomenon by interacting with participants to make sense of their lives, world and experiences (Creswell, 1994; 2014; Merriam, 1988) with the purpose of understanding multiple realities from the participants' perspectives (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In qualitative research, the participant is a rich source of data while, the researcher is the primary instrument for collecting and analyzing the data (Creswell, 1994; Merriam, 1988). Creswell (2014) states that during the research process, the researcher looks for meaning and understanding of the words and pictures as portrayed by the participants and not as interpreted by the researcher.

The Qualitative Research Paradigm

A research paradigm or interpretative framework is “a basic set of beliefs that guides the action” (Guba 1990, p7). Paradigms can be interpreted as worldviews or a set of beliefs that

underpin an individual's understanding of the world and their place and relationship within it (Guba and Lincoln, 1998). The current research is situated within the social constructivist paradigm, which assumes that individuals develop subjective meanings of experiences that are directed toward certain things or objects in their lives (Creswell, 2014). In social constructivism, the world is understood from social and historical perspective. Individuals give unique meanings to things and items in their lives and therefore the researcher seeks to understand the deeper meaning of the relationship between the people and the items (Creswell, 2014). People construct their world from their interaction of themselves and the social and historical world around them. When these individual meanings are developed because of social or historical negotiations, then they are referred as social or historical negotiations and that is referred as social constructivism (Creswell, 2014). Constructivist researchers have beliefs that guide them in the research process and they believe in qualitative data that is:

...in pluralistic, interpretive, open-ended, and contextualized (e.g., sensitive to place and situation) perspectives toward reality. The validity procedures reflected in this thinking present criteria with labels distinct from quantitative approaches, such as trustworthiness (i.e., credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability), and authenticity (i.e., fairness, enlarges personal constructions, leads to improved understanding of constructions of others, stimulates action, and empowers action) (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 125).

For this research the meaning derived from collaborative customization and motivations for consumption of ethnic dress may have been because of social and historical negotiations between the participants and their culture. In qualitative research the researcher performs very important role in collecting and analyzing data.

Researcher's Role

In qualitative research, the researcher plays a crucial role of interpreting the participant's comments and underlying meanings about the world and the objects in their life (Creswell, 2007;

2014). Since the researcher's role may introduce ethical and personal issues into the study (Creswell, 2014), researcher had to detect any potential biases through self-disclosure and identification of any issues that could have affected her subjectivity (Orcher, 2014). The researcher is an African immigrant woman, who has been living in the USA for seven years. This status as a first-generation African immigrant woman could influence the researcher, but she was able to identify this bias at the beginning of the study, thus providing her with a unique emic perspective, which enabled her to better understand subtle cultural norms and jargon potentially used by the participants.

To overcome biases, the researcher used validation strategies such as different data sources (photographs, interviews, and observation), an audit coder, and member checking (Creswell, 2014). Other roles as a researcher included: taking notes of participant reactions and interpretation, using participants' reflections to modify, formulate, or change the research questions, and identify (through informal analysis) the point of data saturation (Orcher, 2014).

Sampling

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivations for the consumption of collaborative customized ethnic dress by African immigrant women. Therefore, the population for study was purposively sampled to include those participants who use their ethnic dress. Since the goal of this qualitative research is to look at the process and meanings individuals give to their ethnic dress, participants were selected purposefully to provide information and descriptions of their experiences in order to develop a comprehensive explanation (Polkinghorne, 1998). Participants were purposively sampled from African immigrant women living in the USA.

This research employed soft ladderling, which has specific guidelines for sample size. Reynolds and Gutman (2001) suggest that at least fifteen people should be included in a soft

laddering technique. The participants were twenty-four African immigrant women living in the USA and were comprised of first generation and second-generation women. There was a total of 15 first generation African immigrant women, and 9 second generation African immigrant women. For this research, first generation are the participants who were born in any African country outside the USA and migrated to the USA when mature, while second generation are those born in the USA or migrated to the USA when they were five years or younger. The participants were sampled using a purposive sampling method to get a rich source of information on the research topic. The criteria for sampling was: (a) African immigrant woman ages above 18, (b) who reside in the USA, (c) and collaboratively customize and (d) wear African ethnic dress.

The researcher having personally acquainted and interacted with numerous African immigrant women and has observed their use of the ethnic dress at various events, was able to approach some of these women for inclusion in the sample. Next, a snowballing sampling technique was employed (Orcher, 2014) to get more participants. The participants were requested to identify other African immigrant women who collaboratively customize and design their ethnic dress and were willing to participate in the study. These individuals were then sent an email and or text messages requesting them to participate in the research.

Other participants were recruited through use of a flyer. A recruitment flyer was posted in public places such as public libraries, college library, community centers and church centers to recruit more African immigrant women (see Appendix C). Snowballing was used to get the participants who were willing to participate in the study. A total of twenty-four African immigrant were recruited for the study.

Data Collecting Strategies

Prior to data collection, permission was sought from the Institutional Review Board of Louisiana State University. For ethical considerations in this study, the researcher obtained informed consent from the participants. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study. The benefits and any possible risks of the study were also explained. Steps to protect participants from harm and maintain confidentiality were discussed. Participants were free to withdraw at any point of the study without penalties. The informed consent was given in writing and the participants signed and kept a copy. Confidentiality of the data will be maintained by keeping any material that may reveal the identity of participants such as interview transcript under lock and key by the researcher.

Data was collected using a single interview with each identified participant. An interview schedule (see Appendix A) was used to guide the interview process. Participants were also asked to share some photos of their favorite collaboratively customized designed ethnic dress. To assist in the data collection, the researcher kept a diary log to enable the researcher to note observations related to participants' thinking, reflections, experiences and perceptions throughout the research process (Reddy-Best & Pedersen, 2015). Observational data is critical to ethnographic research, but many times it cannot explain the "why" behind the observed behavior, therefore the interviews were conducted to understand the reasons behind the motivation of the behavior. According to Blommaert and Jie (2010), interviews are created from conversations and thus they are structured from topics that the researcher wants to discuss. The research therefore developed interview schedule from the topics she wanted to be discussed in the study.

The second form of data were participant's photographs. Use of photographs for research is often referred to as photo elicitation where the research participants interpret one or more photographs (Collier, 1967 in Ray & Smith, 2012). Other researchers who have used photo elicitation in fashion research are Tawfiq and Ogle (2013) and McCormick and Livett (2012). During photo elicitation process, participants selected the photos to use, and this increases their interest, willingness and openness to participate in the interview (Ray & Smith, 2012). Using photographs in an interview adds additional information and "offers a visual dimension to the unobservable thoughts, feelings, experiences and understanding (Richard & Lahaman, 2015 p. 4) of the participants. Participants were asked to identify a photo of their most favorite collaboratively customized African ethnic dress. The researcher then asked each of the participants to explain why they liked the dress and to describe some of the characteristics of the dress. The participants also described how they made the dress, whom they made with, where they got the fabric and to what occasions they wore the dress too. Some participants were willing to have their photographs shown in this write up while others declined.

Interview Environment. A non-threatening environment was created so that the participants were willing to share their perceptions and underlying motivations of creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. This was done by explaining the objectives of the interview to the participants and assuring them that they are the experts of the process and not the interviewer. The interviewer also assured the participants of confidentiality and gave them permission to withdraw from the interview whenever they felt uncomfortable. The interviewer was a facilitator and helped the participants through the discovery process of the underlying motivations of their creation and consumption collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The interviewer continually asked questions like, "why

is that important to you?” as a sign of showing concentration in the process (Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). The main purpose of the interview was to elicit attitude-consequence-value associations that the participants have with their collaboratively customized ethnic dress (Reynolds & Gutman, 2001).

Questions included in the interview schedule provided the following data: biographic data, type of ethnic dress created, fabric used, selection of styles and ethnic dress creation method, when and where they use their apparel and motivations for wearing. Data on the attributes, consequences and benefits and values for wearing the ethnic dress was collected. Pure chat was also used to collect data especially among the younger participants who are techno savvy, those who did not want to do online or telephone interview. Pure chat save time as some multiple participants were able to respond to the interview questions simultaneously and the transcript was immediately accessible, because the researcher did not have to listen and transcribe from the recorder. Smith (2016) in her study used Purechat.com for online interviews.

To help answer the research questions, the Means-end chain MEC theory by Gutman (1992) was used as the theoretical framework of the study. The means-end theory often uses the laddering interview technique. Laddering incorporates an open-ended response format, respondents’ freedom to respond to questions and a definite structure that dictates the order of questions and the use of a standard probing method (Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). The Laddering techniques uses ‘directed probes’ characterized by the question, ‘why is that important? To understand the way in which the informant sees the world (Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). An example of probing question that was asked during the interview is shown below:

Researcher: Why do you wear collaborative customized ethnic dress?

Participant : I wear this dress because I feel it is *well fitting*... it is comfortable to wear, when I sweat, the sweat does not stick on my body...

Researcher: you said that the ethnic dress fits well, what do you mean by fitting well, how does fitting well affect you?

Participant: what I mean is that when I wear this dress it fits my body shape. The tailor takes my body measurements.... the dress is made from my exact body measurements taking care of all my curves... I am *comfortable* in it, you know African women we have bigger hips and so I feel confident when wearing my dress as this improves *my self-image*. I can socialize freely in an event such as a party knowing that my dress fits because it was made using my body measurements.

The responses of the participants generated a ladder, an example of a ladder is presented in Figure 20 below. The ladder shows the interconnectedness between the attribute, consequence and the underlying value of creation and consumption of their collaboratively customized.



Figure 20. Example of Laddering from the Above Participant's Responses.

Twenty-four participants were recruited for the in-depth interview. These interviews lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. These interviews were conducted at a location convenient to each participant. The main objective of the in-depth interview was to explore motivations of the participants in their own words, and probe underlying drives, therefore the semi-structured format provided flexibility to alter or expand questions if the need arose. Semi-structured

interview questions were developed because “less structured formats assume that individual participants define the world in unique ways” (Merriam, 1998, p. 74). Each research question was answered by a couple of questions on the interview schedule as shown in Appendix A.

Data Coding and Analysis Procedures

Analysis begun during the data collection stage. Transcription and close reading of the transcripts, identifying themes and categories from the interviews that represent interests, opinions and behavior were also done (Spiggle, 1994). The categories were formed from preliminary codes from which the transcript was interpreted, and meanings developed.

While conducting the interviews, the researcher simultaneously did microanalysis as an essential way to help get important ideas or constructs that were emerging. From the latest ideas, codes and categories were created. During microanalysis coding, writing, and note-taking took place. The coding processes of the interviews helped to understand the context of the participants’ responses. Nodes were identified to facilitate the utilization of the NVivo 12 software, to create the categories derived from coding to reveal patterns and themes to answer the research questions. NVivo coding provided coding using participants own words (Saldaña, 2013). Each of the interview guiding questions structured as a node in the NVivo application helped to facilitate the analysis. To find emerging categories data was explored and analyzed from the discussion of the interview questions. The transcripts were uploaded into NVivo software. A word frequency query was run to get the most frequently used words. The attributes, consequences and values were derived from this list of words. Open coding done during the microanalysis stage was also used in identifying the ACV’s. The cloud was generated from the data from the participants.

The data was also represented in the form of the hierarchical value maps (HVM). Tables were used to group the codes into attributes, consequences and values. The codes were used to form chains or ladders. A table was constructed to show frequencies of each attribute, benefit and value. Dominant patterns emerging from the themes were noted and discussed.

Steps of Analyzing the Data in MEC Theory. Soft laddering is primarily used to understand motivations for consumer product choice (Kaciak & Cullen, 2009; Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). In the soft laddering interview, the researcher prompts the consumer to “ladder” their way up from attributes, benefits to values that underlie the consumption behavior (Kaciak & Cullen, 2009). The ladder reveals the information that connects the product to product attribute to the consequences to the benefits of using the product and to the values, into a chain link referred to as the Means-End-Chain (M-E-C) (Gutman 1997; Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). The MEC theory often ends in a value, which is the motivating factor behind the product choice and consumption (Gutman 1997; Reynolds & Gutman, 2001).

Reynolds and Gutman (1988) outlined the following steps to analyze laddering data. Step one was breaking the raw conversational data into separate phrases and reviewing the verbatim and probes that represent the concepts expressed by the respondents. Step two involves content analysis of elements selected in step 1. The laddering data is analyzed by a content analysis procedure, considering the three levels of conceptualization: attributes, consequences, and values. Step three and four are the quantitative part, and step three involves the summation of the associations between the content codes of all paired relationships (implications), and step 4 is the construction of a diagram to meaningfully represent the main implication also known as HVM (this was not done for this study).

HVM is a type of cognitive map, which is structural in nature and shows the linkages across the levels of abstraction (Attributes, Consequences, and Values). This type of data analysis creates an understanding of consumers underlying personal motivations, and how a product attribute results into consequences that is personally relevant to the consumer. The laddering technique as an interview technique assisted the researcher to know what is important and why that is important to the informant. Apart from the structure questions asked, participants become reflective and gave more information that was relevant for the study. Interpretation of this data creates an understanding of consumers' underlying personal motivations concerning a given product (Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). To answer the research questions for this study, the quantitative part or step 3 and 4 was not necessary and thus was not done.

Validity and Reliability. Validity for qualitative data ensures that the findings and or making inferences are credible, trustworthy, dependable, transferable, and/or confirmable (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). Validity include checking for accuracy of findings which is often referred to as credibility in qualitative studies (Orcher, 2014). For validity the researcher used the following methods as suggested by Creswell (2014): triangulation, member checking, and use of an external auditor to review the project. Triangulation involved using more than one measure to collect data (Creswell, 2014; Orcher, 2014). Researcher looked for convergence among several sources of data and information to form themes or categories in the study. Triangulation was done in four ways; across data sources (i.e., participants), theories, methods (i.e., interview, observations, documents-photographs) (Denzin, 1978). In triangulation, the researcher's objective was to sort the data, find common themes and categories by providing corroborating evidence collected through observations, interview transcripts and photos (Creswell & Dana, 2000). The present study triangulated the data by using more than one source

of data collection (Patton 1999) which included: interview, observations and documents-photographs. Field notes were also taken during the interview process.

Another method of ensuring validity and reliability was member checking. Member checking involves the sharing of the interpretations of the results with the participants to ensure the accuracy of the interpretations (Orcher, 2014). To ensure reliability, triangulation of data collection was used, and data collection and analysis was reported in detail (Creswell, 2014). Member checking involved finding out from the participants the accuracy of the information. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe member checks as “the most crucial technique for establishing credibility” (p. 314) in a study. In member checking, the researcher asked participants to confirm the credibility of the information and the narrative account by asking them to confirm the data and interpretation. In this research, the participants viewed the raw data (transcriptions or observational field notes) and commented on its accuracy (Creswell & Dana, 2000). The researchers asked participants if the themes or categories made sense, were realistic and accurate (Creswell & Dana, 2000). The participant’s comments were then incorporated into the final narrative, thus, adding credibility to the qualitative study (Creswell & Dana, 2000).

To ensure the reliability of the data collected, intercoder agreement was employed with the help of audit coder (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). The researcher identified an audit coder to assist in ensuring the reliability and validity of the data. Audit coding “involves having several individuals code a transcript and then compare their work to determine whether they arrived at the same codes and themes or different ones (Miles & Huberman, 1994)” (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011, p. 212). Audit coders used NVivo to code the transcripts (Creswell, 2007, p. 210). The Audit coder met with the primary researcher to compare and agree on categories and themes that emerged from the data (Creswell, 2007).

The researcher also ensures trustworthiness by ensuring that credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability are achieved (Guba, 1981, Lincoln & Guba 1985) (Table 3).

Table 3. Provisions to Address Guba's Four Criterion of Trustworthiness

Quality Criteria	Meaning	Possible Provision by Researcher
Credibility (Internal validity)	How truthful are the findings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of well-organized research methods (interview, observation, photo elicitation) • Familiarity of culture of participants • Triangulation of methods, types of informants • Ensuring honesty in informants • Interactive questioning and probing during data collection dialogues • Debriefing sessions between researcher and superiors(advisor) • Peer scrutiny • Members checking
Transferability (External validity)	How applicable are the findings to another setting or group?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of background data to establish context of study, and detailed description of phenomenon in question to allow comparisons to be made
Dependability (Reliability)	Are the results consistent or reproducible?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using overlapping methods • In depth, methodological description to allow the repeatability of the study
Confirmability (Objectivity)	How objective are the findings? How much has the researcher's biases influenced the results?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation to reduce effect of investigator bias admission of researcher beliefs and assumptions • Recognition of shortcomings of the study's methods and potential effects • In depth methodology to allow integrity of research results to be scrutinized • Use of diagrams to demonstrate "audit trail"

Adapted from Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects. Shenton, A. K. *Education for information*. (2004). 22(2), 63-75.

The rationale for trustworthiness is described ... “as simple as: How can an inquirer persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of?” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 p. 290). A pilot study was initiated to check for the validity and the relevance of the interview questions.

Ethical consideration

First the IRB was sought to get a go ahead to carry out the study. IRB was waived see appendix B. Ethical considerations were adhered to during the research process. The researcher assured the participants that their participation was voluntary; they would be able to pull out any time they felt so and they if they so wished, they could refuse to answer a question they felt uncomfortable with. Consent was sought from the participant before the interviews were done. The researcher explained the reason for the interview to the researcher and sought their permission to record the interview. Participants were told that the interview was for research purposes only and that all the material from it would be kept under key and lock, with only the researchers and the university being accessible to it. The participants were also assured of anonymity and confidentiality of their identification.

In this chapter, methods and procedures of the study that were used are discussed. First the IRB was obtained. A total of twenty-four participants were sampled for the study. The researcher did a pilot interview to ensure that the questions were eliciting what they were supposed to. Interviews were conducted at the participant's convenience and recorded. Interviews were transcribed, data was analyzed using NVivo software into codes and themes and reported.

CHAPTER 4. RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivations to collaboratively customize ethnic dress among African immigrant women. Collaborative customization in this study was defined as the process wherein the participants worked with a tailor to create a desired garment. Attribute coding was done on background information of the participants related to age, marital status, length of stay in USA and educational level (Saldaña, 2015). Analysis and interpretation of the data focused on answering the research questions. From the interviews with the participants, attributes, consequences and values that motivate African immigrant women to collaborative customize and wear the ethnic dress were identified. Dominant themes that emerged from the data included, functionality, self-expression, adaptability and versatility, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, cultural and ethnic identity and, collaborative customization. Similarities and differences between motivations for consumptions of collaboratively customized ethnic dress of first and second generation are also being discussed. In this chapter, demographic data, is discussed followed by the dominant emerging themes of the research, attributes, consequences and values, and finally generational differences.

Demographic Information

A total of 24 women were purposively sampled for the study. This was a convenience sample of African immigrant women living in a metropolitan city, southeastern part of the USA. The participants were surprisingly from West African immigrant women. The snow balling technique happened to identify them because they seemingly wear the African ethnic dress more than other African women, and their ages ranged from 21-54 years old, with mean age of 37 years. Fifteen of the participants were first generation immigrants, while nine were second generation immigrants representing 62% and 38% respectively.

Table 4. Combined Demographics of Participants

Demographic	N (Number)	Percentage
<i>Ages</i>		
20-30 Years	10	42%
31-40 Years	3	13%
41-50 Years	9	37%
50+ Years	2	8%
<i>Education</i>		
Postgraduate	7	30%
Bachelors	4	16%
Associate Degree	8	33%
Other	5	21%
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Married	14	58%
Single	9	38%
Widowed	1	4%
<i>Employment</i>		
Students	5	21%
Fulltime employment	19	89%
<i>Length of stay in USA</i>		
5-15 Years	7	29%
16-25 Years	13	54%
26-35+ Years	4	17%
<i>Generation</i>		
First generation	15	62%
Second generation	9	38%

First immigrant generation African women were participants who migrated to the USA as mature women, while second generation African women were participants that were born in the USA or migrated to the USA when they were five years old or younger. Pseudonyms have been used throughout the paper to maintain participants' confidentiality. The descriptive statistics for each demographic item are presented in Table 4. All of them had some form of post-secondary college education and had lived in the US for a minimum of 5 years. The longest time a participant had lived in the USA was 37 years.

Of the 24 participants, 14 (58%) were married, 9 (38%) were single and 1 (4%) widowed. A total of 45% of participants said they had a bachelors or some graduate degree for their education level. Seventy one percent (n=17) had lived for at least 16 years or more in the USA. A total of 29% (n=7) had lived in the United States between 5 and 15 years. Tables 5 and 6 contain the demographic information of first generation and second generation respectively.

Table 5. Demographics of First Generation Participants

Participants	Age	Education	Marital Status	Years in US
P1AB	54	PhD	Married	27
P2BC	55	MSc	Married	37
P3DE	43	AS	Widowed	12
P4FG	47	AS	Married	10
P5HI	37	MA	Married	11
P6JK	49	BSN	Married	16
P7LM	46	PhD	Married	8
P8NO	47	PhD	Single	5
P9PQ	47	AS	Married	23
P10RS	48	BSN	Married	20
P11TU	47	AS	Single	24
P12VY	42	AS	Married	17
P13 XZ	33	AS	Married	17
P14 ZA	35	BSN	Married	7
P15ZB	30	AS	Married	6

Table 6. Demographics of Second Generation Participants

Participants	Age	Education	Marital Status	Years in US
P16ZC	23	BSN	Single	23
P17ZD	21	BEng Student	Single	21
P18 ZE	30	MSc	Married	25
P19ZF	28	M.D	Single	28
P20ZG	22	BSC student	Single	22
P21ZH	28	AS	Married	24
P22 ZI	23	BA Student	Single	20
P23 ZJ	22	BEng Student	Single	19
P24 ZK	28	PhD student	Single	26

Interview Data

These same twenty-four participants also did in-depth interviews. The interviews lasted approximately 30 to 45 minutes. The interviews were conducted at a location convenient to each participant which included: lobby of church premises, lobby of campus, and the researcher's campus office. The main objective of the in-depth interview was to explore motivations for collaborative customization and consumption of the African ethnic dress by the participants, in their own words, and to probe underlying drives. Therefore, the semi-structured format provided flexibility to alter or expand questions if the need arose. Semi-structured interview questions were developed because "less structured formats assume that individual participants define the world in unique ways" (Merriam, 1998, p. 74).

The interviews were triangulated by photos that the participants provided during the interview. Each research question was answered by a couple of questions on the interview schedule. A total of 168 pages were transcribed from the interviews. Data was analyzed using constant comparison method which includes three stages of coding, open, axial and selective (Creswell, 2007). Open coding resulted in categories. The categories were then compared and grouped into larger categories in the selective coding stage. Finally, the categories were compared and collapsed into larger themes (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The researcher wrote observations in memos to document personal reflections and impressions of the participants throughout the data collection and analysis process (Creswell, 2014). Use of memos was used by the researcher to help organize the codes and themes. Finally, analysis was done with defined codes using NVivo to locate the attributes, consequences and values of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress.

Overview of African Ethnic Dress

Prior to delving into the specific features of the ethnic dress worn by the participants, a brief overview of more universal characteristics of African ethnic dress will be highlighted. African immigrant women wore dresses, wraps skirts, shirts, straight or mermaid skirts, headgear, pants and shorts made of African fabrics. Findings showed that the preferences of the younger women differed slightly from those of the other women. While the older women, who were mainly first generation, preferred wraps skirts and loosely fitting tops, the younger or second generation preferred pants, short dresses and tops that they could pair up with jeans or pants. The head wrap or the *gele* was an important aspect of dress, especially for the first-generation African immigrant women. Most of the participants said they would not wear African dress without the *gele*. The *gele* made it complete and unique, it added beauty to the dress. Figure 21 shows some participants with their African ethnic dress and the *gele*. One participant described the *gele*;

It is the beauty and the pride of the African woman... it is a pride to the woman because when a woman wears the *gele*, when she ties the big scarf on her head and ties the wrap around her waist, everything they got on, that *gele* or the big scarf, it makes her look beautiful and shows everything that you got on. (P11 TU)

Results revealed that a majority of the participants wore *gele* with the collaboratively customized ethnic dress, but there were variations among them with the younger women wearing it less frequently. Figure 21 shows a first-generation participant wearing her *gele*, wrap and her collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Younger participants preferred wearing the collaboratively customized ethnic dress without the headgear, unless it was compulsory for an event like one that required an *Aso-Ebi* to be worn with the *gele*. *Aso-Ebi* dress is used when a group of people wear uniform apparel, each individual collaboratively customizes their own, but they have to use similar fabric that is suggested by the celebrant. Often, African women wear this

type of dress to show unity or solidarity with the celebrants. For example, if a young person was part of the bridal party and the dress code included a *gele* in such a case they had to wear it. The participants especially the first generation preferred the wrap skirt because they claimed it was easy to adjust the fit and easy to wear it around the waist. For example, figure 21 shows a participant in a wrap skirt and a *gele* and the blouse is collaboratively customized.



Figure 21. Participant Wearing a Wrap, *Gele* and Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress (Photograph Courtesy of Participant)

Fabrics. The African ethnic dress worn by the participants was often made from fabrics such as *Ankara*, *Kente*, *Georgette*, *Hollandaise* and *lace*. *Ankara* fabric was primarily used by the participants. Fabrics were sourced and bought online from Africa and Europe (France, Britain, and Belgium). A few stores were found in larger cities like Houston, but often not locally. The participants stated that they had either to travel to large cities or buy from online

stores such as www.Yarafabrics.com, www.Aaroninternationalstores.com and www.AliExpress.com among others. Fabric was also sourced from online stores as far as London, for example www.Empiretextiles.com, www.Metrotextiles.com and www.middlesextextiles.com. It was also common to use multiple methods of obtaining fabric, as P11TU stated, “I choose my fabric, order online or family send it from Africa.”

As indicated in the quote, fabric was frequently sourced directly from Africa, sent by relatives or acquired by the participants when they managed to visit their home countries. Some participants indicated that when they bought the fabric from Africa it was more authentic because the African traders were able to distinguish the fake from the original fabric. Majority of the participants expressed that they used fabrics that were not entirely African (participants referred to the Ankara fabric as the African fabric) in nature and worked with a tailor to design well-fitting African style apparel for them. For example, in figure 22 below one participant and other women made their apparel from white cotton fabric, she said that the apparel was comfortable and deemed acceptable for her ethnic dress (see Figure 22 below).



Figure 22. Participant (Left) Wearing a Dress She Said was not Made from African and it was *Aso-Ebi* With Head Gear (Photograph Courtesy of Participant).

In regard to online fabric purchases, the following quote was made:

I buy the fabric online, sometimes from London, sometimes from India or other states in the US but no store sells the fabric in Baton Rouge. When I travel to Nigeria to Africa ...that is when I buy the fabric or have the dress made over there (P2 BC).

Another participant made similar comments:

I get fabric from mostly Africa, when I travel I buy from there because it is cheaper there than here. Sometimes I buy online from traders who buy from Africa and sell here. I even bought fabrics as far as London. London has very high quality African fabrics. Most of my laces, georgettes, I have bought from the London online stores at fair prices (P7 LM).

In general, the participants created their collaboratively customized ethnic dress with fabric that they sourced not only from Africa, but from other parts of the world.

Occasions. The participants indicated that they wore their African ethnic dress to social functions such as to church, birthdays, wedding parties, naming ceremonies and other religious ceremonies. Participants wore their ethnic dress mainly to church because of its “decency” or modesty. As previously stated, on some occasions they wore pieces that were uniform in terms of fabric, which they referred to as the *Aso-Ebi*, a fashion style where the individuals will design and wear similar colored dresses to show unity with the celebrants. A participant shared a picture of her and her friends wearing *Aso-Ebi* for a church function below (Figure 22). She said that the fabric was white cotton and she created an African style dress to wear for the function. She said, “I made this dress to wear for a church thanksgiving service, I showed unity and harmony, it was not African fabric, but my tailor made it in a wrap and top.”

Aso-Ebi was a style that the majority of the participants wore for occasions that required them to show unity with the celebrants. Overall, the participants had positive feelings toward this style of dress and wearing it for special occasions. One participant had this to say about *Aso-Ebi*, “it means solidarity, so a lot of times when I do *Aso-Ebi*, I do it for solidarity, meaning I am behind you” (P1 AB). Participants gave several reasons as to why they wore the *Aso-Ebi*, “I would wear *Aso-Ebi* so that I am seen” (P3 DE); “I use *Aso-Ebi* for identification purposes with the party goers” (P7 LM), and, “we do *Aso-Ebi*, we do it for solidarity” (P1 AB). Figure 23 shows a participant wearing *Aso-Ebi* in a group photo.



Figure 23. African Immigrant Women Wearing *Aso-Ebi* in a Wedding Ceremony (Photograph Courtesy of one of the Participants)

One participant mentioned that she did not like the *Aso-Ebi* because she felt that the celebrants were exploiting others by charging them twice as much as the cost of the fabric in order to raise funds for their occasion. She stated:

Aso-Ebi is a Yoruba word, it means solidarity... so a lot of time when they do *Aso-Ebi*, they do it for solidarity ... meaning I am behind you and sometimes people use it as a fundraising to support the celebrants ... so when I noticed that the celebrants exploit others I do not participate and sometimes it becomes a competitive kind of doing things. (P9 PQ).

But most participants claimed to wear the *Aso-Ebi* as P18 ZE explains below:

You wear the dress when coming to the wedding. It is kind of an identity because if you are not putting on and you come for the wedding people will know whether you belong to the groom's family, bride family or friends because each group will pick a different fabric for the occasion... so once you walk in the wedding you are identified by the color of your *Aso-Ebi*. Kind of identity, unity, sense of belonging (P18 ZE).

Collaborative Customization

Collaborative customization in this study was the process where the participants worked with a tailor to create a desired collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Apart from two participants who said they often sewed their own dress unless it was a complicated design, the rest of the participants 91% (N=22) created their collaboratively customized ethnic dress with the help of a tailor. Two participants P18 ZE and P11 TU said they believed they were creative enough, so they made their own clothes unless it was a very complicated style. They made most of their African ethnic dresses. They believed that they always made better clothes than most tailors. For instance, one woman stated:

I have always made my own African dresses because I find it awkward to wear what everybody else is wearing...but I ended up learning how to make my own clothes because a lot of tailors did not make what I really wanted... every time, they made one, I would always see a mistake. Yes, it makes me feel some self-esteem knowing that I made it by myself...is the best part... this is me who made it, and no one else is wearing the same thing. (P18 ZE)

While these two participants were comfortable making some ethnic dress, there were occasions when a tailor might still be sought out. For complicated styles, P11 TU would use a tailor to help her figure out as she explained “but if it is a classy blouse or fancy style, I use tailor to make for me. In this case I chose my style, I explain to the tailor how I want my garment made” (P11 TU).

Inspiration. Most participants noted how they got inspiration for their collaboratively customized African ethnic dress for example, from the internet, other African women, celebrities and fashion bloggers and the tailor to create their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. P11 TU said “... the ideas for my styles come from looking on the internet from other African

women who post pictures on social media dressed in their ethnic dress.” While P7 LM and P16 ZC noted respectively:

I get the ideas from looking online, from other African women who post pictures on social media dressed in their ethnic dress. The tailor also gives me suggestions on what is trending. In this way I get to choose the style I want. P7 LM

A lot of influence a lot of ideas, a lot of times, I get it from social media, I follow a lot of African shops, African attire pages on Instagram especially and sometimes from the tailor depending. P16 ZC

Creating the Ethnic Dress. Participants also described how they collaboratively customized their ethnic dress. When working with a tailor, the participants’ tasks included sketching and describing what they wanted created. P2 BC said this when asked how they create their collaboratively customized ethnic dress:

If he (tailor) suggests a style, I look at it and we can restyle it according to my needs. We can modify the sleeves or the skirt or the neckline depending on the style. When I have chosen my style, I often draw it for him or explain how I want it to look like. He then goes ahead and draws a sketch according to my explanation. Then he shows me and if the sketch depicts what style I want then we agree if not I tell him, or I sketch by myself, then he goes ahead to make the dress. After he makes the dress I come to get it, and before I take it with me, I fit to see if it is well done. Most of the time it fits perfectly because he took my measurements. Then I can wear it for the occasion I wanted it for.

Participant P7 LM also described how she collaborates with the tailor to make her ethnic dress,

I choose the fabric... I had bought from Africa or online. Unless it is a decorative zipper or button but most of the time, he picks the buttons and zippers. Even though he may help me choose a style I finally select it or modify his choice so at the end of it I get to choose my style (P7 LM).

One participant shared the picture of one of her favorite dress because she collaboratively customized it, she chooses the fabric that had her favorite colors and she loved the prints too. Her tailor made it fit her perfectly (See figure 24).



Figure 24. Participant Wearing *Gele* and Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress (Photograph Courtesy of Participants)

It was common for the participants to leave some decisions with their tailor. One participant explained, “My tailor does choose the style for me because she is an experienced tailor and I trust her to make a better judgment with what is best for me and suits the type of fabric that I brought for her” (P9 PQ). Participants also described the process of collaborative customization, they described how they co-create their African ethnic dress. They first look for the appropriate fabric they need depending on the occasion and decide the style they want beforehand. P8 NO claimed that, “I usually get my fabric from Africa and then I go look for my designer...”

Tailors Role. The results showed that the tailors were also African immigrants who had mostly been tailors before relocating to the USA. As indicated in the previous section, the tailor's role was often to take the participant's body measurements and help with sketching the desired dress, cut the fabric and create/ sew the dress. Participants mentioned that most times the tailor helped them to select the findings for the dress but they (participants) ultimately choose the fabric and the style. A majority of the participants worked with a tailor to create and style their ethnic dress. They felt that the tailor was able to incorporate their needs and values and create a dress to their satisfaction. P1 FE points out, "...I buy the fabric, and take it to the tailor, who makes for me just to the exact style and standards that I want."

Participant's Role. During the process, the participants described what they wanted in the dress, sometimes they sketched the style they wanted to have made. They collaboratively customized their African dress with the help of the tailor and typically were able to get a perfect fit that often complimented their body shape as one participant put it:

I get to work with the tailor who takes my body measurement before making the dress for me. So often the resulting dress will fit my body shape. Given that most readymade clothes do not put in my mind my African shape ... big hips so most times I get to wear varied sizes for tops and bottoms ...but when I make my African clothes, they fit me well because of measurements are mine and not the standardized measurement (P7 LM). Participants noted that some tailors acted as the designer and had styles on hand that customers could choose from and modify depending on what they wanted. This process was explained by one participant, who stated, "when I go to make my dress sometimes I choose the styles from his (the designer) book" (P2 BC). While another claimed, "... I may have a style but his (the designer) book has the latest styles that I always choose from" (P12 VY).

Relationship with Tailor. Most of the participants had a personal relationship with their tailor that had sprung from the collaborative customization process. They had often used the same tailor for several years. P5 HI had this to say, "Since 2008, I have been using the same

tailor it is about ten years and I like what they do and that is why I have been with them for that long.” Clearly, participants had worked with the same tailors for a long time, some like P13 XZ said they had worked and had developed personal relationship with the tailor to an extent that the tailor knows what style she likes and what fits her body shape. P13 XZ also explained that she had known the tailor for a long time, 10 years, and that the tailor knew her taste and can create for her anything she desires. So, her relationship with her tailor and being able to get what she wants was a motivation for her to collaboratively customize the African ethnic dress.

Reasons for Collaborative Customization. Concerning some of the reasons that enticed the participants to create collaboratively customized ethnic dress using this method, participants mentioned, fit as a result of their body measurement being used in the creation process, their input into the process like choice of fabric and style and the beauty of the final dress. Some illustrative quotes were, “you choose your own style and they make it for you,” (P15 ZB) and “that sets it apart and makes it unique from the western style” (P12 VY). Another participant claimed that her collaboratively customized ethnic dress, “fits perfectly...she makes for me good quality.” Some mentioned the uniqueness of the style of the finished garment as the reason for collaborative customization. Collaboratively customized dresses were exclusive because no one would create a style like the other even if the fabric was similar. The idea that the tailor took their measurements to create a design and style of their choice made them to invest in this process because of the end product. The dress would fit perfectly because of using their body measurements. This saved them the time and the hassle of going through several ready-to-wear garments in a store to get their size and fit. Other factors that made them collaboratively customize their dress are given by participant P5 HI, who stated, “Because I style with the tailor I feel confident, good about the new dress. I love the style, design, beauty, length of the skirt,

cleavage, fabric, fit, ease of caring, no dry cleaning, long lasting.” Participant P14 ZA also explained, “I mean it fits me better ... they are customer made the tailor takes my measurements... I feel that I look better in my African outfit than in my ready to wear outfit.”

The fit and style was also important to the African immigrant women. A majority of the participants said that they did not like most of the garments the ready-to-wear market offered. Ready-to-wear are made for mass markets and typically did not fit them properly. Participants were forced to try on several garments before they could get the right size. They noted that they wore varied sizes for varied brands and that was frustrating.

Although it took time, the participants claimed that it was worth the time and money spend. They looked forward to the customized ethnic dress, because of style features and uniqueness and that it expressed their creativity. Participants believed creating the African ethnic dress was an investment because of the money and time used and so they cannot easily dispose of their dress.

Dominant Themes Related to Ethnic Dress Features

Data collected was coded and the motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized African ethnic dress were coded into dominant themes. The strong links between the attributes, consequences and values revealed some dominant motivational patterns for consumption of the collaboratively customized African ethnic dress. These thematic patterns were: functionality, self-expressions, self-esteem, adaptability and versatility, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, and cultural identity. Table 7 contains a summary of the dominant themes of collaboratively customized ethnic dress.

Table 7. Dominant Themes for Wearing Collaboratively Customized African Dress

Theme and Meaning	Codes	Exemplar Quotations
<i>Functionality</i> Referred to the functional qualities, utility	Superior quality, fabric, pattern, comfortability, 100% cotton, fabric easy to blend, fit, durability, fits my body shape	...are made from cotton fabric, so they are very comfortable (P1 AB) ...African dress is made of cotton and cotton is a very comfortable fabric... (P3 DE) ...I wear these garments they are comfortable to the skin... (P6 JK) They have lasting fabric, lasting clothing... (P17 ZD)
<i>Self-expression and Self-esteem</i> Included attributes about the individual's expression of the self and self-esteem included attributes about self-worthiness	Gives confidence, self-identity, about me, able to sketch, inspired, self-esteem, self-worth	When you are comfortable, you feel confident (P10 RS) ...is my size and my measurements (P2 BC) It gives me identity a sense of belonging that I have African roots. (P18 ZE) ...opportunities to show off the culture in any other place (P11 TU) ...to feel proud of my culture at the same time (P13 XZ) First, the fit gives me self-esteem, I... (P9 PQ) Makes me feel a million-dollar worth... (P11 TU) ...dress is free or loose comfortable compared to regular clothes or dresses (P3 DE) I feel beautiful, and the styles, it just beyond my imagination... (P10 RS) ...makes you stand out, you love the fabric, so tell me (19 ZF)
<i>Adaptability and Versatility</i> Ability to use the African ethnic dress in many ways	Adaptable, can style one differently for different occasion, can be worn anywhere coordinate with other clothing, special occasions, investment	Yes, distinctive styles for separate occasions, for church (P10 RS) ...scarf out of the same fabric as the dress ... then you I can adjust it to fit accordingly. It very adaptable... (P1 AB) ...I can wear same dress with different <i>geles</i> and get a different effect (P12 VY)

(Table cont'd)

Themes and Meaning	Codes	Exemplar Quotations
<i>Aesthetics</i> Refers to the beauty, the elegance the style of the dress	Elaborate, elegant, style, beautiful, bright colors, colors, different, stand out, my style, only me, unique, patterns on fabric	...fabric is beautiful and elegant. Fabric comes in broad range (P19 ZF) ...tailored Ankara fabric so elegantly designed you will feel rich... (P11 TU) ...most of the colors, I love the bright colors the designs ...the fabrics are so unique ... (P13 XZ)
<i>Emotional Attachment and Clothing Longevity</i> A special attachment wear often and have had the dress for prolonged periods.	Reminds me of home, memories, never donate, will keep even if it does not fit, love it, does not fade, durable, long-lasting, pass on to children, inherited, not giving out.	... it reminds me of good memories (P2 BC) ... I still have some Nigerians outfit that I made twenty-four years ago... I have an attachment to them because I came with them... (P3 DE) Yes, it is worthy the waiting, the moment you get it and you wear it, people appreciate the beauty (P13 XZ)
<i>Cultural and Ethnic Identity</i> Identification with ethnic group, culture	My roots, African, culture, heritage, reminds me of home, origin, sense of belonging	...belong somewhere, to this particular culture, it reminds me of my... (P17 ZD) It gives me identity a sense of belonging that I have African roots. (P5 HI) ...connect with my roots. I love wearing my African... ...is to show case your culture, show your traditional, show the... (P24 ZK)

Functionality. Functionality referred to the functional qualities that made African immigrant women want to collaboratively customize and consume ethnic dress. This research indicated that the African immigrant women collaboratively customized and consumed ethnic dress due in part to functional attributes such as: Fabric, fit, comfort, and quality, durability of the dress and ease of care. Quality also included the construction and the fabric.

To most participants, the fabric was made of cotton and they really appreciated this textile and its properties. Participants expressed the functionality of the fabric in several ways such as, “most of the fabric used is 100% cotton, when you sweat cotton absorbs all the sweat, and when you wear these garments they are comfortable to the skin... you do not itch or scratch yourself,” (P2 BC). Another participant stated that she preferred cotton, “...well because it is comfortable, I feel very comfortable” (P5 HI).

Participant were very specific to explain the comfort of cotton fabric that the Ankara fabric is made of and said, “Compared to some of the ready-to-wear clothes, these clothes do not develop static electricity which makes clothes to cling on the body making one uncomfortable where you keep adjusting the dress” (P2 BC). Participant P22 ZI noted that,

Comfort was another characteristic of collaboratively customized First it showed my identity, it was well fitting and comfortable... it is made of 100% cotton which is very comfortable to the skin.

Other fabrics were chosen by the participants for their ethnic dress and included lace, georgette, and hollandaise. However, none of these fabrics were viewed to be as functional in terms of comfort, like the participants viewed cotton.

Fit as a functionality characteristic was a dominant reason for the participants to wear collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Fit was very significant to the participants because it was associated with comfort. As P3 DE stated, “it is well fitting and comfortable... it is made of cotton.” Another participant claimed that, “I co-create because I am able to get what fits me” (P8 NO).

Durability was also identified as a functionality element of the African fabric. The participants claimed that African fabrics lasted for a long time. A majority of the participants agreed that their dress, even though those items that were as old as ten years, still looked new

every time they wore it, for instance, "...my dress has grown old, and it still look new, I still wear them" (P5 HI). Similarly, P10 RS noted that, "I wear it, it still looks as new as ever."

Self-Expression and Self-Esteem. Self-expression was a critical motivation for wearing collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Self-expression in this research referred to how the collaboratively customized ethnic dress made the participants feel about themselves. The collaboratively customized ethnic dress boosted their self-confidence, self-esteem, self-image, and ability to express themselves creatively. Wearing the dress increased self-confidence because participants felt that the dress fit them perfectly and brought out their best. For instance, "I know that the dress is my exact size and it fits my body shape, you can never go wrong with this dress" (P2 BC).

Participants also explained that when the clothes fit them, they felt good about themselves, and it boosted their self-esteem, as described by Participant P6 JK, "I love to wear my African dress in the USA for many reasons, one it fits me well." Another participant stated:

The dress gives me self-confident, I feel that that I am elegantly dressed, I can walk in the party and no one else has a dress like mine and this gives me as a woman a sense of pride. I enjoy the party (P16 ZC).

When compared to the ready-to-wear garment, the majority of the participants said the fit of African ethnic dress was more desirable to wear and in turn increased their self-confidence, "I am able to hide my ugly features and highlight my good feature which does not happen with ready to wear garments... long cute skirts that cover my legs and makes me feel confident" (P11 TU). While P12 VY noted that, "ready to wear is too common, mass produced everyone is wearing the same thing, there is no difference, but the African dress gives me a unique idea of me... that is me." The dress also improved their self-image, by covering less desirable body parts and highlighting others. Some participants said that the collaboratively customized ethnic dress

made them feel unique and expressed themselves as has been previously discussed. P8 NO also described that, “Wearing this dress makes me feel modesty dressed, happy, gives me self-esteem, self-worth, identity with others, belonging to others, unity, unique, happy.”

Participants also explained that when the clothes fitted them especially when they knew that their body parts were covered, they felt good about themselves, and it boosted their self-esteem, as described below:

I enjoy the party, I love the skirt length all body parts are covered. Wearing this dress makes me feel modesty dressed, happy, gives me self-esteem, self-worth, identity with others, belonging to others, unity, unique, happy Fit gives me self-esteem, I know that the dress is my exact size and it flirts my body shape. You can never go wrong with this dress.... Because I style with the tailor I feel confident, good about the new dress. I love the style, design, Beauty, length of the skirt, cleavage, fabric, fit, ease of caring, no dry cleaning, long lasting. (P7 LM).

Participants noted that having self-esteem when wearing the collaboratively customized ethnic dress gave them confidence to enjoy the moment, “The dress gives me self-confident, I feel that that I am elegantly dressed, I can walk in the party and no one else has a dress like mine and this gives me as a woman a sense of pride. I enjoy the party,” said participant P16 ZC.

Adaptability and Versatility. Adaptability and versatility was the ability to use African ethnic dress in many ways and on separate occasions. Most participants stated that African ethnic dress could be used for both formal and informal occasions making it easily adaptable. They mentioned that the ease of styling and use of different headgear for each occasion made African ethnic dress adaptable for almost any situation. Some said they could make it simple and go shop or use headgear and go to a party, as described below:

But then we also have the simpler ones that you can wear on your head...you can make a scarf out of the same fabric as the dress ... then you can put it on your head into a beautiful way and then you will not be overdressed (P1 AB).

If I am dressed and I am wearing the same fabric on my head, and somebody said that this occasion is bigger than what I think, I can just run and change the headgear and then

I won't be simple any more. In other words, I can adapt so quickly to the occasion I am going to (P3 DE).

Others said that the blouses could be worn with a skirt, wrapper, jeans or a matching color of pants, making the dress very versatile. Adaptability was achieved by a majority of the participants who said that they could wear a dress with smaller headgear to a low-key event and then turn around and wear the same dress with an elaborate hat to go for a bigger occasion such as a wedding without having to change the dress and the two impressions would not be the same. One participants expressed how it is easy to adapt the dress to run a few errands without wasting any time. She claimed:

In my house I may have some Ankara dress on, relaxing and if want to run something in Walmart, I just pick up my headscarf and run it around my head and I am ready to go to Walmart, I am decent. You can adapt as easily as you can and then... you can turn it around to anything you want to be without any stress (P5 HI).

Participants said that the fabric patterns made it easy to accessorize and put together without much trouble. For instance, participant P9 PQ claimed that it is "easy to dress and throw on, easy to accessorize, because African clothes are bright colored, is beautiful, the rainbow colors, we love those colors, it is thus easy to throw on and accessorize" (P9 PQ). African dress is adaptable in a way that it is easy to change the style. As these participants described:

P11 TU: "you can wear but in a unique way... if you go to church and you want the scarf on the head. Right now, I have *Aso-Oke*, *Aso-Oke* you tie on the head and it comes in two pieces. You tie one on your head and you can use the second one to tie around your waist or on hang on your shoulder. Or fold it and carry it with your purse or use it across your shoulders..."

P2 BC: "At least it is not tight fighting the wrap is also great, I can adjust it to fit accordingly. It very adaptable... if I change the gele and the *Aso-Oke* that is tied around the waist, this dress would have a completely fresh look from what you see, and one would think it is a new dress. I like the idea that I can change the style in a few minutes and look different".

Versatility made it easy to style the ethnic dress to fit any occasion they desired. The participants would wrap the *Aso-Oke* (scarf) in diverse ways. The versatility of the

collaboratively customized ethnic dress enabled the participants to style it, to fit each of the occasion. For example, for church, “You put the scarf on the head and you carry the other wrapper in the hand with the purse that is for church” (P7 LM). While P15 ZB said,

But if you are going for a wedding, or a party and you take another one and wrap it around the waist so what it does it shows the same color on your head and around the waist, making it look formal enough for a party.

Participants also said that they could wear ethnic dress to the office by styling it in a straightforward way. They often created simple skirts and blouses to wear to the office these were worn without an elaborate *gele* to be more work appropriate. Some women specifically created simple tops to go with dress pants. One participant showed the top that she often wore with her dress pants to the office. She collaboratively customized it with a tailor and her friend also made a skirt in the same way (see figure 25).



Figure 25. A Participant wearing of Collaboratively Customized Dress That can be Worn to the Office (Photograph Courtesy of Participant).

Therefore, African ethnic dress was perceived as being both adaptable and versatile. Participants were able to wear their garments to several occasions by making slight changes in

how they style their ethnic dress or by simply changing their accompanying headgear to suit the formality of the occasion. Ethnic dress could also be worn in an office environment if suitable toned down.

Styles created from this fabric can be worn for separate occasions. For example, P5 HI mentioned “My African dress has distinctive styles for separate occasions, for church service, it would be more modest outfit, for wedding more elaborate, more sparkly fabric and for other occasion.” The beauty of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress made it to be used for different occasion. Another participant said this, “I like them (referring to ethnic dress), and they look pretty.”

Aesthetics. Aesthetics refers to the beauty and the style of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Participants said that they were motivated to wear African ethnic dress because of the beauty of the fabric, the elaborate colors of the fabric, the pattern on the fabric and the styles that could be created using this fabric. The beauty of the fabric was widely noted by the participants. Most participants claimed that the African fabric was so beautiful and elegant and that when people looked at it, they admired the garments. The participants noted that the fabric, particularly the *Ankara* fabric, had beautiful designs. For instance, one participant stated: “African fabric is beautiful and elegant. Fabric comes in broad range of designs that creates great apparel the fabric can be styled in any way, blended with other fabrics to make beautiful designs” (P7 LM).

Participants agreed that the elaborate colors, and the patterns on the fabric helped to create the uniqueness of their ethnic dress. They felt the beauty of the fabric which contributed to the overall beauty of their ensemble. Participant’s contribution to the process of creating the dress often resulted in a unique dress. To make their African dress, participants choose fabric and

styles. They had to look at the fabric and figure out what style would go well with the fabric pattern. They claimed that the dress would be beautiful for the occasion at hand. For instance: I lay it out and think, what pattern would go with this fabric, what style would go with this? And then I would look at the design and my body shape, I know the styles that look good on me. (P18 ZE). The participants expressed that the uniqueness and the bold colors of the fabrics that are used to create the African ethnic dress resulted in beautiful items. Another participant stated that, “Beauty is in the color ...African attire has uniqueness, always eye catching, the beauty, color, uniqueness and unique styles and even the design” (P4 FG). Participants also noted that the *gele* added the elegance and the beauty to overall look of this dress, “with the *gele* added to it, then you look elegant and beautiful” (P24 ZK). The research findings also indicated that the beauty of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress led to the possibility of the dress to be used for various occasions. One participant claimed, “It is beautiful, and you can wear it in white and traditional weddings, baby showers, graduations, inauguration, any big occasions” (P3 DE).

Most participants communicated that the styles created were unique compared to ready-to-wear clothes (or what they referred to the English clothes) that they would buy in the stores, as the following participants had this to say about the African dress, “the way they were designed they have an African touch to it... that sets it apart and makes it unique from the western style” (P1 AB). While P7 LM noted how the fabric created unique attire, “The fabric creates pretty styles that make you stand out and make you unique, you know that no one else has a design like yourself.”

Aesthetics were also expressed as ability to create beautiful styles. Participants mentioned that the styling made the collaboratively customized ethnic dress beautiful and elegant, for example, “The fabric creates pretty styles, which are simple and elegant, the styling is so simple”

(P10 RS). Although it was easy to style and create beautiful garments, the younger participants thought that the *gele* head gear was so difficult to style yet it produced elegant styles and so, they needed the help of their mothers to do it. P19 ZF had this to say, “Mom makes it without struggling but the *gele* takes me forever to put it together, most cases mom has to help me.” Most participants indicated that the wrapper was simpler to tie around the waist, but some young participants feared that it would fall in case of vigorous dancing. “The wrapper is stylish but the fear of having it drop while dancing is real, so I have to tie it using several knots” (P21 ZH). Some participants also indicated that the beauty of the collaboratively customized dress was that you could customize and create a garment for yourself and use similar fabric to create a matching outfit for your spouse as seen in Figure 26 below. Besides beauty, participants said the matching attires showed family unity, respect and appreciation and can be worn for special occasions.

Generally, the findings of this study indicated that aesthetics of the collaboratively customized African dress is because of design and the beauty of the fabric, the African fabric which is beautiful and elegant. Fabric comes in broad range of designs that create great apparel. These fabrics could be styled in any way and blended with other fabrics to make beautiful designs.



Figure 26. A Participant Wearing a Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress matching with Her Spouse (Photograph Courtesy of Participant)

Emotional Attachment and Clothing Longevity. Emotional attachment and clothing longevity emerged as a theme from the findings of this research. Emotional attachment referred to participants having some form of special attachment with the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The special attachment made them have memories of why, when and how they wore the garment. Such memories made them live longer with their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Emotional attachment included: memories of extraordinary events, weddings, funerals, and other special parties. For example, P1 AB explained how she has preserved one of her collaborative customized ethnic dress because she made it and wore it in her mother in-law's funeral and it was special to her. Other special memories were of recent events such as this graduation of a family member:

This outfit I wore it during my daughter's graduation. I made it just for graduation, because I wanted us to feel and get in touch with our African identity and the success of our daughter. (P12 VY).

Only one participant did not keep her dress because of the emotions that were attached to it. Participant P15 ZB noted that she gave away one of her ethnic dress ensembles because it had sad memories of the funeral of her mother and she never wanted to remember that sad day.

However, most participants could not easily dispose of their collaboratively customized ethnic dress and they often wore it several times in a year. Most participants said every time they wore their collaboratively customized ethnic dress, although these items were often not new, they still got compliments from friends and family on the look of the dress, which increased their attachment to the dress. For instance, one participant noted, "when I wear my dress even if it is an old one, I get compliments, this makes me not want to give it out" (P22 ZI).

The participants also associated the never 'going out of style' feature of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress with longevity, as P11 TU described "my dress never gets out of style, unlike the ready-to-wear which gets out of style quickly, my dress is always in fashion it does not matter the season." Participants also mentioned that their collaboratively customized ethnic dress had a longer life span compared to other apparel in their closet as Participant P3 DE detailed, "I am the type that keeps or cares for materials, and the dress that I wore during my traditional wedding is still with me. This is about 16-15 years...especially *buba*, you can still keep them forever." *Buba* is a blouse that is made like a kimono. *Buba* is can be worn with an *Aso-Oke*, *Aso-Oke* comes in two pieces and one can be tied around the waist and the other as a head tie. Figure 27 shows a participant wearing a *buba* and *Aso-Oke*.



Figure 27. Participant Wearing a *Buba*, the *Aso-Oke* tied on the Head and Waist (Photograph Courtesy of the Participant)

When describing a special memory attached to her collaboratively customized ethnic dress, P13 XZ had this to say, “It is memorable to me because that was a changing dress, made especially for my white wedding, was one of changing dress, very memorable that I don’t want to give it up.” The changing dress was the dress she had to wear to attend her wedding reception and it was collaboratively made using fabric she had sourced from Africa. This was the dress she wore for her wedding reception five years ago and it was a collaboratively customized ethnic dress and she still has special memories attached to it. A majority of participants had lived with their collaboratively customized ethnic dress for some time, P2 BC mentioned, “I have blouses that are as long as my years in marriage, 30 years old.” As exemplified by the previous quote,

participants had African ethnic dress which was very attached to their memories, so they kept those items longer. Findings revealed that the participants would not typically donate such collaboratively customized ethnic dress because it reminded them of good memories such as their weddings, unique events and their home country.

For example, Participant P6 JK had an outfit that was 24 years old that she had brought to the US from her home country. The clothes were still as good as ever as she notes concerning her several collaboratively customized ethnic dresses, “they still look the same, they have never grown old, and they still look new, I still wear them, I have an attachment to them because I came with them from Africa and I still wear them.”

Clearly, participants cherished their older ethnic dress and would not give them away unless to a very close family member like a child. Emotional attachment was also linked to the effort, time and money that was spent on the acquisition of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. P7 LM had this to say:

It makes you have a special attachment. I look forward to the dress because most of the time I sketched the design and I am anxious to see how it came out. It is very expensive though... it costs \$80-\$150. But it is worthy the waiting (P7 LM).

The emotional attachment increased the longevity of the product. A majority of the participants shared that they would not give up their dress because of the special attachments they had with them. So that relationship increased the lifespan of the collaboratively customized dress.

Cultural and Ethnic Identity. Cultural and ethnic identity was one other motivation for the African immigrant women to wear collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Cultural and ethnic identity for the participants was expressed through dress that allowed for a connection to their heritage, cultural roots and a feeling of home away from home. It also referred to a feeling that a participant’s culture was unique from the rest. All participants mentioned that the use of

the collaboratively customized ethnic dress was very important to them as it was a cultural artifact. One participant noted that her ethnic dress was, “a good reflection of my culture, which is one of the most important things for me” (P19 ZF). Participants also noted that the identity the garments gave them was the reason they preferred to buy fabric from Africa. Some participants indicated that when they bought the fabric from Africa it was more authentic because the African traders were able to distinguish the fake from the original fabric.

The results revealed that the ethnic dress gave the participants identity and a chance to showcase their African roots. It also made them feel proud of their culture, especially during ceremonies like weddings and graduations. For instance, one participant stated, “... it goes down for its uniqueness and ...and a reflection of my culture and just bringing out cultural awareness and now that more people are wearing it” (P16 ZC). Another participant claimed that she went through the collaborative customization process to make her ethnic dress because, “I wanted to feel African, to show my identity to feel proud of my culture” (P6 JK). Another participant claimed:

Because it is part of my culture it is who I am and so wearing it is part of my identity so wearing it does not mean I forget who I am... like do what they do. So, it is part of me, culture and identity. (P24 ZK).

Participants also communicated about the uniqueness of the dress in relation to their cultural identity as a motivation to wear the collaboratively customized ethnic dress.

When they wore the dress, it made them feel good about themselves, and it connected them to their culture as P4 FG said:

Every time I wear it, I feel good about myself and I feel like I am representing myself, I am representing where I came from, my culture, I am not lost but I am still in touch with my culture. (P4 FG).

And P2 BC claimed that the uniqueness of her ethnic dress, made her proud of her culture and she wanted people to know about her connection to Africa, “my dress makes me proud of my culture... I want people to know that I am from Africa through my dress without having to speak.” P8 NO also noted, “It gives me identity a sense of belonging that I have African roots.”

A majority of the participants mentioned that unlike ready-to-wear apparel where you are likely to meet someone wearing “the same dress, the same style, the same fabric the same everything” the collaboratively customized ethnic dress is unique. This point is illustrated by P12 VY:

But with the African outfit even if you choose the same fabric, chances are that the styles the styles cannot be the same. Because I will tailor make mine according to how it will fit me, and you will make yours according to your taste. That really sets me apart and am one of those people who do not like uniform... I like uniqueness... I want my dress to be my dress (P12 VY).

Cultural identity was a theme that all the participants expressed, they all noted that they wear their collaboratively customized ethnic dress because they want to be identified with their African culture. Wearing the ethnic dress made them feel proud of their ethnicity and their originality.

Attributes, Consequences and Values (ACV) for Consumption of the Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress

Research findings indicated that participants were motivated by various attributes, consequences and values in their consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The values were the final goal of motivations for consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Meaning was derived from the attributes and the consequences of consuming the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. During the 24 interviews, participants identified several attributes that the researcher followed with probing questions to reveal the underlying benefits and values that motivated their consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. By

means of the word frequency developed by the NVivo software analysis the most frequently mentioned words were noted to identify the ACV's. Content analysis was also used, to identify words, phrases and sentences that represented the elements of MEC theory. Words and phrases that were similar or had similar meaning were allocated to a single element (attribute, consequence or value). In addition, the open coding done during analysis helped the researcher to verify the ACV's. Table 8 shows the summary of the Attributes, Consequences and Values for consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress and the number of participants who mentioned each either directly and indirectly.

Attributes such as 'tailored' meant that the ethnic dress was made to the participant's taste. Since the collaboratively customized ethnic dress was customized using participant's body measurements, the attribute tailored was highly mentioned. Other attributes included decency which was synonymous to modesty.

Table 8. Summary of Attributes, Consequences, Values and Number of Participants who mentioned each

Concrete Attributes	Abstract Attributes	Functional Consequences	Psychological Consequences	Instrumental Values	Terminal Values
Comfort (24)	Versatile (13)	Good fit (15)	Satisfaction (20)	Self-identity (21)	Cultural identity (24)
Adaptable (10)	Modest (15)	Uniqueness of dress (24)	Self-esteem (24)	Self-expression (23)	Aesthetics (24)
Simple to style (20)	Stylish (20)	Looking Good (20)	Sense of belonging (24)	Enhanced creativity (21)	Social identity (24)
Durable (16)	Beautiful (21)	Elegant (24)	Self-confidence (24)		Economic value (15)
Quality (20)	Classic (23)	Investment (13)	Emotional attachment (16)		
Tailored (24)					
Expensive (10)					
Easy to maintain (20)					
Good Fabric (24)					

The Consequences of the Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress. Consequences are the more abstract meaning that participants associated with the collaboratively customized dress and they indicate the benefits, or the risks associated with the attributes. Consequences were linked to the attributes that were mentioned by the participants. Both psychological and functional consequences were described. Functional consequences were the direct tangible outcomes of consuming the collaboratively customized ethnic dress, and psychosocial consequences were the intangible personal outcomes of consuming collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The psychosocial consequences are benefits that can either be psychological or social in nature. For example, good fit stemmed from the attribute tailored. Phrases such as “fit perfectly,” “suitable for my body shape” and “my exact size” were mentioned by participants. Elegance and style were also consequences of tailored. Other functional benefits were uniqueness of the dress, looking good, elegant and modest. Psychological consequences were more intangible, for example satisfaction, sense of belonging, self-confidence and emotional attachment. Satisfaction was mentioned by most participants other words that were synonymous to satisfaction were “looks good on me,” “I love my dress” and “fits me well I love it.” For the participants wearing the collaboratively customized ethnic dress meant, self-esteem, a sense of belonging, self-confidence, emotional attachment and investment (of time or money).

The Values of the Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress. Values were the highly abstract meanings, end goals or the beliefs that the participants sought to achieve through consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. These final goals or underlying values in relation to consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress were grouped as either instrumental or terminal. Instrumental values are the modes of behavior or responsibility that helped the participants to reach to their final goal. For example, having self-identity, self-

expression and enhanced creativity. Terminal values were the final goals or the participant's desirable state of existence and this included: cultural identity, aesthetics, social identity and economic value.

Table 9. Attributes, Consequences and Values Important to Each Generation

	First Generation African Immigrant Women	Second Generation African Immigrant Women
Concrete Attributes	Comfort Adaptable Simple to Style Durable Quality Tailored Expensive Easy to Maintain Good Fabric	Comfort Simple to Style Durable Quality Tailored Easy to maintain Good Fabric
Abstract Attributes	Versatile Modest Stylish Beautiful Classic	Modest Stylish Beautiful Classic
Functional Consequences	Good Fit Uniqueness of Dress Looking Good Elegant Modesty Investment	Uniqueness of Dress Looking Good Elegant Modesty
Psychosocial Consequences	Satisfaction Self-Esteem Sense of Belonging Self-Confidence Emotional Attachment	Satisfaction Self-Esteem Sense of Belonging Self confidence
Instrumental Values	Self-Identity Self-Expression Enhanced Creativity	Self-Identity Self-Expression Enhanced Creativity
Terminal Values	Cultural Identity Aesthetics Social- Identity Economic Value	Cultural Identity Aesthetics Social Identity

Cultural identity was the word that was mentioned more often. Words that were synonymous with cultural identity were “my roots” “my heritage” “my culture” “my African culture”. Through use of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress, participants were able to communicate their culture to the world.

Generational Differences

The research identified two groups of participants as first generation and second generation African immigrant women. First generation African immigrant women are participants who migrated to the USA as mature women, while second generation African immigrant women were participants that were born in the USA or migrated to the USA when they were five years old or younger. Results showed that women from both groups showed both similarities and differences in their motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress.

Similarities. Both first and second generation had similarities in their motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Cultural identity was important for both groups. They all mentioned that collaboratively customized ethnic dress made them to identify with their African culture, which was a source of immense pride. For instance, one second generation African immigrant woman stated, “The African dress show who we are, it shows our culture” (P24 ZK). Similarly, a first-generation African immigrant woman said, “I wanted to feel African, to show my identity to feel proud of my culture” (P6 JK).

First and second generation African immigrant women were motivated by the desire to express their selves. The collaboratively customized ethnic dress improved their self-esteem, their self-identity, self-confidence and social identity. The women used the collaboratively

customized ethnic dress to feel good about themselves and to be part of the group especially when they wore the *Aso-Ebi* styles for weddings and other functions.

Aesthetics was also an important motivation for both groups. The beauty of the *Ankara* fabrics, with their bold bright colors, created unique styles for the participants. For instance, “I love the bright colors the designs that are so beautiful and unique” (P17 ZD). Thus, both groups of participants were motivated by the following values: self-identity, cultural identity, aesthetics and social identity.

Differences. Differences were found among the motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among first generation and second-generation African immigrant women in the USA. The first major difference was found in the source of inspiration for ethnic dress styles. The styles of the most first-generation women were inspired by other women or by use of the internet to see what was trending in Africa at that time. For example; P11TU a first-generation African immigrant woman said, “... the ideas for my styles comes from looking on the internet from other African women who post pictures on social media dressed in their ethnic dress.”

In contrast, the second generation tended to follow specific African dress designers and subscribed to their blogs. They were also found to follow some of the celebrities that wear African designs such as Beyoncé and Solange Knowles. P17 ZD a second generation had this to say about inspiration, “I follow celebrities...I know Beyoncé who even in her Music videos wears African fabrics and patterns...I get some inspiration from what she wears.” And participant P19 ZF, also a second-generation African immigrant woman said, “the tailor gives me suggestions on what is trending...I get to choose the style I want. Sometimes I create my own styles.” Participants thus ended up with a collaboration with the tailor.

While first generation African immigrant women bought fabric and made their ethnic dress with a tailor, the second generation depended on their mothers to help them get the fabric and take them to the tailor. They did not have a long and cordial relationship with the tailor as compared to the first-generation women. This is exemplified by P23 ZJ who stated, “I told my mom I wanted a dress and she went ahead to find for me a tailor and make it for me” (Second generation). For P23 ZJ her mother created a dress for her with the tailor and she said she liked it. She often went with the mother to the tailor.

The second generation also preferred a combination of traditional African styles and western styles when designing their garment. One participant stated, “I use western style using the Ankara fabric... kind of a blended design” (P20 ZG). Figure 28 below shows a second-generation participant in a blended design. The younger generation preferred using African fabric (Ankara) to create western styles.

Consideration of cultural norms for modesty and appropriate dress were less significant for second generation women than it was for the first-generation African immigrant women. Styling especially of the headgear was significantly different. The first generation could not survive without the *gele*, while the second generation thought that the *gele* was overdressing and so they rarely wore it. The first-generation women wore the *gele* multiple times, the differences in wearing was the size of the *gele*. The more elaborate ones were used for weddings and parties, while the lesser *geles* were used for church and other low-key function. The second-generation women often did not like the *gele* as P2 BC described about her daughters, “I have 4 daughters and they all love the African dress, but the baby wears it too, and she is not crazy about it only if she likes it. She prefers the simple one without the *gele* or headgears.”



Figure 28. Second Generation Participant wearing Western Style made using *Ankara* Fabric (Photograph Courtesy of Participant)

Differences were also found on the type of dress preferred, the second generation who were mainly young people, felt the wrap skirt was for the older people and it was complicated to tie. P1 AB, a first-generation African immigrant woman who had a daughter, had this to say about second generation women, “they find it difficult to wear it... they fear it may fall apart... and they often need help to wear it.” P18 ZE described similar differences between the two generations and stated that, “my mum wears the elaborate *gele* to almost everywhere, she wears the wrappers, the elaborate head gear, all dressed up with beads, and the one that you hang on the shoulder, the scarf, I can’t do that.” A majority of the first-generation participants noted that their younger daughters wore their collaboratively customized ethnic dress differently than first

generation women. It was typically thought by the first-generation women that the second-generation women tended to wear ethnic dress that was less glamorous, utilized less wrappers and generally wore more fitted outfits. P6 JK describing graduation dress her daughter made:

she used African fabric to make a skirt and a top, they were so gorgeous, it was a skirt and a top but the way the skirt and top were designed you cannot find in such styles in JC Penny... so the way they were designed had that African touch to it... that sets it apart and makes it unique from the western style. They are being creative with the styles so many new styles and designs... they may forget the wrapper in the long run.

Another first-generation participant described her daughters and collaboratively customized ethnic dress:

My daughters wear their ethnic dress differently. They even design them different from my style. Their style would be less elaborate. Most times they do not wear the headgear when they wear their African dress. The style would be more of shorter dresses unlike me I would wear the long styles. I have most of tops covering my arms, but my daughters would wear sleeveless tops. They even have used the African fabric to create shorts and pants that they wear with other tops that are not made of the African fabrics. They have tops that they wear with jeans too. So, they actually style way different from me (P1FE).

Additionally, the second-generation immigrants described how their mother wore their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. One participant stated that her mother, “wears them, she has them, she has a bunch of them, because her styles are different, and her styles are different she is more conservative side” P16 ZC. Another second-generation participant described how her mother wore her collaboratively customized ethnic dress, saying that her mother’s dresses were more modest:

She is more conservative like the dress I showed you... is off shoulder, she would not wear that she would prefer to wear up the shoulders... when it comes to such something above the knee, she would not wear that... so she wear the attires but different because she is more conservative, she has long, lengthy, dresses and it covers more (P17 ZD).

P2 BC, a first-generation African woman immigrant who lives with her mother and her daughter mentioned that her style and her mothers were almost the same and that they would wear similar

outfits to a party. However, P2 BC's style was very different from her second-generation daughter's style:

My mother and I wear alike ... my daughter cannot wear the African dress to work. She wears it mainly... for African party, she can comfortably wear it as skirt blouse and *gele* but not wrap... but most times when she wears the African dress she does not wear the *gele*...because she does not know how to wear it on the head by herself. So, my daughter wears it differently.

One interesting thing that came up was that majority of the first generation who were married often wore collaboratively designed ethnic dress and used similar fabric to create an outfit for their spouses as seen in figure 27 above. While both generations were motivated by the all the values: self-identity, cultural identity, aesthetics and social identity, self-expression, creativity enhancement and economic values, the major difference was in how they styled their ethnic dress and how they related to their tailor. Second generation kept their styles simple compared to first generation but did not have a personal relationship with the tailor like the first generation. Table 9 shows the summary of the first and second-generation differences and similarities.

Table 10. First Generation Motivations to Create and Wear Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress

First Generation African Immigrant Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetics of the dress was important to them • Ethnic dress gave them cultural and diasporic identity • Ethnic dress had functional characteristics of fit and comfort and quality • Expressive characteristics such as self-expression was found • Overall appearance - stylish, design details, color combination flattering and showing body curves were qualities of the dress • Satisfied with dress and process because their efforts were paid off • Dress was a source of pride, self-identity, beauty and uniqueness • Styling involved simple to very elaborate <i>geles</i> to all occasions • Style and designs were more conservative or African • Had personal relationship with tailor • Dress had less exposure of body parts, more coverage and modest • More of collectivistic cultural characteristics • Inspiration was from other women and the internet wore dress most times
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Table 11. Second Generation Motivations to Create and Wear Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress

Second Generation African Immigrant Women	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aesthetics of the dress was important to them • Ethnic dress gave them cultural and diasporic identity • Ethnic dress had functional characteristics of fit and comfort and quality • Expressive characteristics such as self-expression was found • Overall appearance - stylish, design details, color combination flattering and showing body curves were qualities of the dress • Satisfied with dress and process because their efforts were paid off • Dress was a source of pride, self-identity, beauty and uniqueness • Styling involved simple to no gele except for some occasions • Style and designs were more contemporary, e.g. shorts pants, sleeveless or more of a blend • Did not have a personal relationship with tailor they depended on their mother • Dress had more exposure of body parts, less coverage and • More of bicultural characteristics (both individualistic and collectivist cultural characteristics) • Inspiration was from online fashion designers, bloggers and celebrities
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In conclusion, this chapter discussed the results and findings of this research. Demographic data was described, overview of the African ethnic dress was given. The dominant themes resulting from the results was also discussed. The attributes, consequences and values of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress were also discussed and, finally the generation differences were addressed. Chapter five will discuss the finding in relation to other studies.

CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivations of African immigrant women to collaboratively customize their African ethnic dress. The participants included 15 first generation women and 9 second generation, for a total of 24 participants. First generation African immigrant women were participants who migrated to the USA as mature women, while second generation African immigrant women were participant who were born in the USA or migrated to the USA when they were five years old or younger. The layout of this chapter will be as follows: first the demographic data will be discussed, followed by interview data, overview of the African ethnic dress, and dominant themes related to ethnic dress features. The themes that emerged included: functionality, self-expression, self-esteem, adaptability and versatility, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, and cultural identity. Finally, the ACVs will be discussed by comparing them to concepts found within the MEC theoretical framework and the research questions answered.

Demographic Data

Demographic data indicated that the women had lived in the USA for between 5-37 years and their ages ranged between 21-54 years old with a mean age of 37 years old. The demographics were not a representation of all the African women immigrant women living in the US. The second-generation African immigrant women were younger compared to first generation immigrants, but the samples mean age of 37 was younger than the mean age of African immigrants in the US which is at 42 (Anderson, 2015). Therefore, the current sample is a bit younger than the actual population under investigation. The participants were women from West Africa, which is a good representation since West African immigrants account for the majority of African immigrants in the USA (US, Census Bureau, 2016).

The demographic data indicated that the participants were highly educated with some form of education above high school. Those with a bachelor's degree and above were 46%, supporting that the African immigrant women have a higher education attainment than the overall immigrant population in the USA which is only 28% (Gambino et al., 2014). However, African immigrant women have the highest education attained among immigrant women in the USA, having the highest number obtaining bachelor, masters and doctorate degrees (Thomas & Logan, 2012). Therefore, the participants are a good indicator for the larger population in terms of their elevated level of education.

Marital status, age, and length of stay influence acculturation and may also have affected the data collected (Sam & Berry, 2010). Individuals who migrate at mature age are more likely to have high ethnic identity as seen in the first-generation participants in this study (Sam & Berry, 2010). Most participants in the current research had lived longer in the USA than their home country, but they still had high affinity for ethnic dress.

Interview Data

Semi structured interviews and photo elicitation were used for data collection from 24 participants. Semi structured interviews assume that individuals are in a better position to define the unique ways of doing things (Merriam, 1998) and such interviews allow for adjusting of questions to get the response needed. Using the laddering technique, which probes the interviewee, attributes, consequences and values underlying the consumption of collaborative customization ethnic dress were identified. Coding of the transcripts was done to create themes. Nvivo was used to manage the data. Nvivo was helpful in getting quotes, creating word tree word cloud and mind maps that made it easier for the researcher to retrieve quotes from the

transcripts. Nvivo generated word query which was helpful in locating attributes, consequences and values.

Research Questions

A number of research questions were developed as part of this inquiry. Each research question is discussed in this section.

Research Question 1. What Types of Ethnic Dress do African Immigrant Women Collaboratively Custom Design?

Participants were asked to identify the types of collaboratively customized ethnic dress that they made and explain when they wore them. The research found that African immigrant women collaboratively customized and wore ethnic apparel in the form of dresses, wrap skirts, shirts, blouses, straight skirts, mermaid skirts, headgear, pants and shorts made of African fabric. The African immigrant women wore headgear especially the *gele*, this item was worn more often by older women (first generation) than young women (second generation). These findings supported the claim that African immigrant women from West Africa often wear the *gele* as a form of identity (Strübel, 2012). Younger women wore less *gele* unless it was an occasion like a wedding and they had been chosen to wear the *Aso-Ebi* which required identical garments and such events often required *gele*. Thus, wearing the *gele* and the collaboratively customized ethnic dress, made them to belong to their social group. As a member of the group they had to follow the prescribed dress code of the group to enhance their sense of belonging and their self-concept (Strübel, 2012).

The participants had their ethnic dress made from fabrics such *Ankara*, *Kente*, *Adire* and *Aso-Oke*. African immigrant women often use other fabrics that are not entirely African to create their African styles fabrics such include, *georgette*, *lace* and *hollandaise*. However, the participants viewed the non-African fabrics as being acceptable for ethnic dress as long as they

were sewn into African style garments. The fabrics were sourced online from across the world as far as Africa, and Europe. Online marketing has made it easy for consumers to buy products across the world (Shanthi & Desti, 2015).

Most of their collaboratively customized ethnic dress was made of *Ankara* fabric supporting previous research by Oyedele and Babatunde (2013) who found that the *Ankara* fabric was more popular, affordable, easy to maintain and versatile. The qualities of *Ankara* fabric such as its lightness, colors, and the patterns can be blended with other fabrics to creatively design elegant apparel, all of which were mentioned by the participants. *Ankara* fabric has fiber content (100% cotton) which was also appealing. When well-tailored, *Ankara* produces gorgeous garments (Oyedele & Babatunde, 2013) as described by the participants in this study. This fabric is popular in Africa, in such a way that traders selling fabric often stock the *Ankara* fabric (Adebowale, 2017).

Today's fashion has diversified the use of the African fabric to include pants, blazers and accessories such as sandals, chokers, bags, shoes (Adebowale, 2017). The *Ankara* fabric has become very popular to an extent almost every African woman has a piece of *Ankara* dress item in her closet including some Hollywood, music and run-way celebrities, such as Beyoncé, Rihanna, Naomi Campbell, Agbani Darego, Kelly Rowland, Lupita Nyong'o, and even former first lady Michelle Obama (Adebowale, 2017). With the popularity of this fabric, it is no surprise that the participants would also enjoy using it. *Ankara* fabric was the most frequently used fabric to create the collaboratively customized ethnic dress, confirming that this fabric can be designed into beautiful apparel and accessories that people are now wearing to any place, anytime and anywhere (Adebowale, 2017).

The second-generation participants preferred blending their *Ankara* fabric with other “western” fabrics when designing their African ethnic dress. This blending can be interpreted as a visual reminder of the acculturation process. As a result of the acculturation process, second generation often integrate their ethnic culture with host culture and become bicultural (Berry & Sam, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010) while they decide to choose only a few aspects of their ethnic culture that they would like to keep (Erik, 2014; Yakushko et. al., 2008).

Participants wore their collaboratively customized ethnic dress to social functions such as weddings, parties, and church among other occasions. These locations have been identified as places for wearing ethnic dress in previous studies (Diop & Merunka, 2013; Gbadamosi, 2012; Strübel, 2012). Unlike previous research which found that African women wear their collaboratively customized ethnic dress to social functions more frequently (Gbadamosi, 2012; Strübel 2012) than at the workplace, this research found that most participants also wear their collaboratively customized ethnic dress to work but often without the headgear (*gele*). The participants feared that the *gele* would draw too much attention at work. Both generations wore their dress to work while the first generation wore it as either designed as full dress or matching top and bottom, the second generation blended either skirt or pants with a western styled item. This again could be attributed to acculturation, as those who wore the collaboratively customized ethnic dress for work kept it simple with less stylistic features and no headgear to avoid attracting attention in the work place (Strübel, 2012). It is possible that in the six years since Gbadamosi and Strübel did their research individuals have become more aware of cultural diversity in the work place and thus, ethnic dress has become acceptable. Future research should examine ethnic dress and its acceptability in the workplace.

The researcher found that the African immigrant women collaboratively customized and wore ethnic apparel in the form of dresses, wrap skirts, shirts, straight skirts, mermaid skirts, blouses, headgear, pants and shorts made of African fabric. The first-generation African immigrant women wore the headgear especially the *gele* more often than younger women. Both generations also wore *Aso-Ebi* for special occasion that needed to show unity or solidarity. The most commonly used fabric by the African immigrant women to make their collaboratively customized ethnic dress was *Ankara*, although other fabrics like *georgette*, *hollandaise*, *lace* were also used. The women made distinctive styles like the *Aso-Ebi*, which is often worn for celebrations, they also made wrap skirts, shirts, and blouses like the *buba* and wore headgears made of Ankara fabric or special fabric. The *gele* headgears was made from special fabric. The women also made distinctive styles of gele for each occasion. Party wear was more elaborate with larger *geles* compared to the church style, which was simple with smaller *gele*.

Research Question 2. What Motivates African Immigrant Women in the US to Collaboratively Customize Their Ethnic Dress?

African immigrant women living in the USA had several reasons that motivated them to collaboratively customize and design their ethnic dress. The process involved both the customer and a tailor, who sometimes acted as the designer (Anikweze, 2012). From the results the participants had long standing relationships with their tailors who had created for them several outfits over an extended period. The tailors often created outfits that perfectly fitted their clients. This were similar remarks from Niinimäki (2011) who found that designers can use the customer's personal history which includes meaningful memories and associations and use them to design unique products. Such product may possess performance and aesthetic characteristics that may lead to the product's increased longevity. The increase in longevity was seen by the participants in this study. The dresses that they design have some special attachments and they

live with them longer. The African immigrant women showed satisfaction with their African dress and therefore, they continued to collaborative customize with the tailor because this process resulted in having their needs met (Fletcher, 2012; Lamb & Kallal, 1992; Sanders & Stappers, 2008). A designer's fulfillment of consumer needs and values through a design process such as the collaborative customization produces satisfaction and leads to product attachment (Niinimäki, 2011). Such product attachment leads sustainability, because the consumer is less likely to dispose of the item within a brief period of time.

From the results it also emerged that the participants got satisfaction from the collaborative customization of their ethnic dress because they felt that their efforts in participating in the design process had paid off. Paid off in terms of money and time spend that produced a desired product, often long lasting and aesthetic, supporting previous studies (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015; McGrath, 2012; Niinimäki & Armstrong 2013).

Participants mentioned that ready-to-wear clothes produced by fashion apparel companies were similar in style and design, thus limiting their creativity. These mass-produced items made the African immigrant women feel less happy with the fit and created dissatisfaction, supporting previous studies which found that fitting African women's figures is a particular challenge in the apparel industry (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015; McGrath, 2012). The collaborative customization process explored in this research showed that there were conversations between the participant and the tailor leading to an understanding of the participants needs, identifying how to fulfill those needs by making a customized product for them (Gilmore & Pine, 1997; Klein et al., 2014).

During the collaborative customization process of designing their ethnic dress, the participant typically chose the fabric, the style and sometimes even the findings for sewing the

dressess, thus, increasing their creativity and their self-esteem. The tailor used his/her knowledge and skills to create the participant’s desired product. Figure 28 contains a model that demonstrates the collaborative customization process. This process increased creativity, self-esteem and in return participants had emotional connections with the ethnic dress.

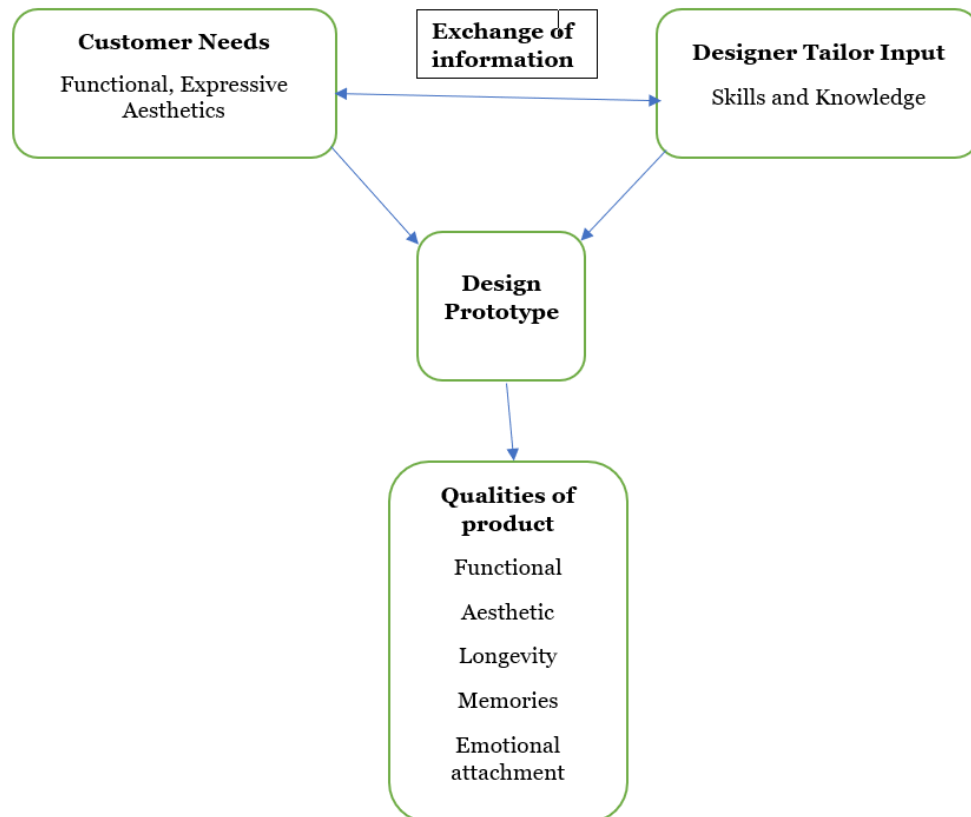


Figure 29. A Proposed Collaborative Customization Model

The women often retained their ethnic dress for extended periods of time, one participant kept an apparel that she collaboratively customized for about 30 years, and she still has it with her. Others developed special attachments to their collaboratively customized ethnic dress because of investing time, money and effort in it. Participation of the consumer who is the end user in the design process can result in fulfillment and attachment with the product, product satisfaction and product attachment (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015; McGrath, 2012; Niinimäki,

2012; Niinimäki & Hassi, 2011). These findings support those of Niinimäki and Armstrong (2013) that functionality, special memories, emotional satisfaction, aesthetical qualities, personal values and quality, increased individual attachment to garments.

This research found that African immigrant women customized their ethnic apparel because of the underlying values. The underlying values included self-identity, self-expression, creativity enhancement, cultural identity, aesthetics, social identity and social value. The underlying values were the inherent reasons, the end goal for motivation to wear their collaboratively customized dress.

Other factors that encourage this process include interpersonal relationship with the tailor. The African immigrant women made their customized dress with the help of the tailor. The tailor took their body measurements and made for them an apparel that fitted their body shape. Compared to ready-to-wear apparel, the fit of the African dress was better, they preferred to customize their own dress because it fitted them well. With several years of making with their tailor, they developed a relationship that encouraged them to keep making this dress. They were sure that the tailor was able to identify their needs and create a desired product for them.

Research Question 3. What Attributes, Consequences (Functional and Psychological Benefits) and Values do African Immigrant Women get From Collaboratively Custom Ethnic Dress?

The aim of the study was to identify the attributes, consequences and values using the MEC Theoretical framework. Attributes, consequences and values of consumer consumption form a chain link. Figure 30 below shows the attributes, consequences and values (ACV) and their level of abstraction. In this framework, the values are the highly abstract meaning of consumption, and the final underlying goal of consumption that consumers seek. But the initial point is to identifying attributes of the products and then the consequences of the product and

finally the values. Attributes lead to consequences, and the consequences finally lead to the values, values are the goal of consumption.

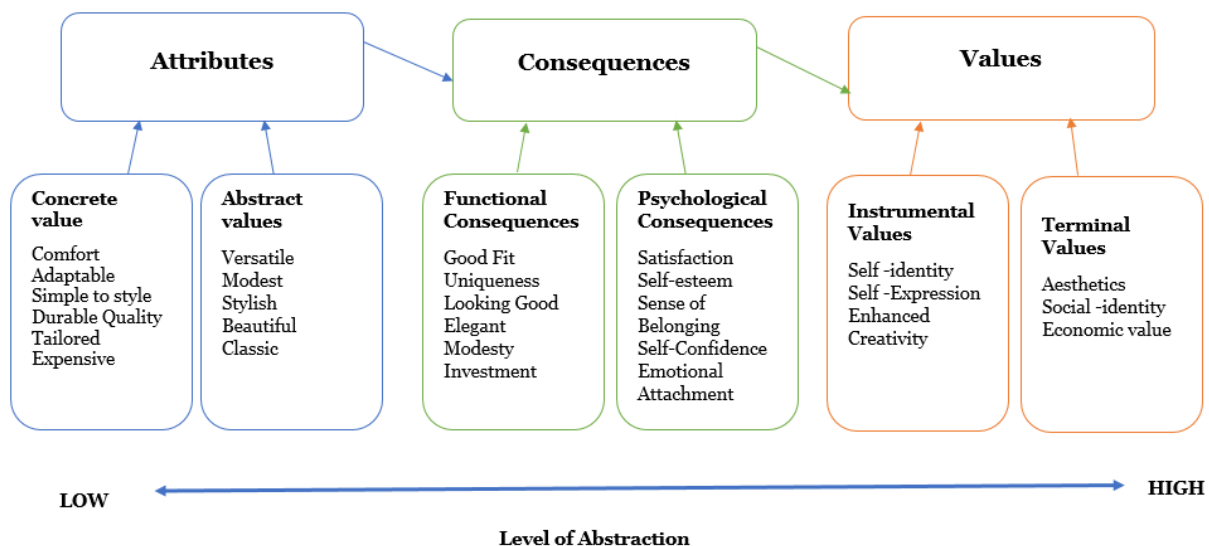


Figure 30. A-C-V Chain Link for Collaboratively Customized Ethnic Dress

In this study, the participant's final goals or underlying value in relation to consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress were; self-identity, self-expression, creativity enhancement, cultural identity, aesthetics, social identity and economic value. This supported previous studies that cultural identity motivates individuals to use ethnic dress (Chattaraman & Lennon, 2008; Gbadamosi, 2012; Strübel 2012). Consumers get attributes such as comfort, durability, quality, and good fabric from apparel in general and participants also got these attributes from collaboratively customized ethnic dress supporting previous studies (Apeagyei et al., 2013; Brown & Rice, 2012).

Consequences are the more abstract meaning that participants associated with the collaboratively customized ethnic dress and they indicate the benefits, or the risks associated with the attributes. Consequences were linked to the attributes that were mentioned by the

participants. Personal benefits such as looking good and modest were found to be similar to those found among consumers who are motivated to use sustainable fashion (Lundblad & Davies, 2015). Outcomes of consuming collaboratively customized ethnic dress include other personal factors such as good fit, elegant, and uniqueness that were found to be benefits of apparel consumption in general (Apeagyei, 2008; Song & Ashdown, 2010).

Values were the highest abstract meanings, end goals or the beliefs that the participants sought to achieve through consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The participants' final goals or underlying motives in relation to consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress were the instrumental and terminal values. The attributes, consequences and values then were used to create an ACV link shown in figure 24 above.

The ACVs links can then be used to create a Hierarchical Value Map (HVM) Map that can show the relationship among the elements of motivations as seen in Figure 31 below. Linking the ACVs resulted into Means-end chain (A-C-V link) showing that consumers have both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation for consumption (Gutman, 1997; Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). Basic attributes resulted in consequences of consumption, and the consequence then resulted in a higher abstract level, the values. An example of an HVM was created for participant P11MU. HVM are cognitive maps that show the linkages between the attributes, consequences and values (A-C-V). This is a good illustrative case of how the participants thought of their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. It is also interesting to note that the participants did not think in the same way and so each individual's ACV would be different from the other.

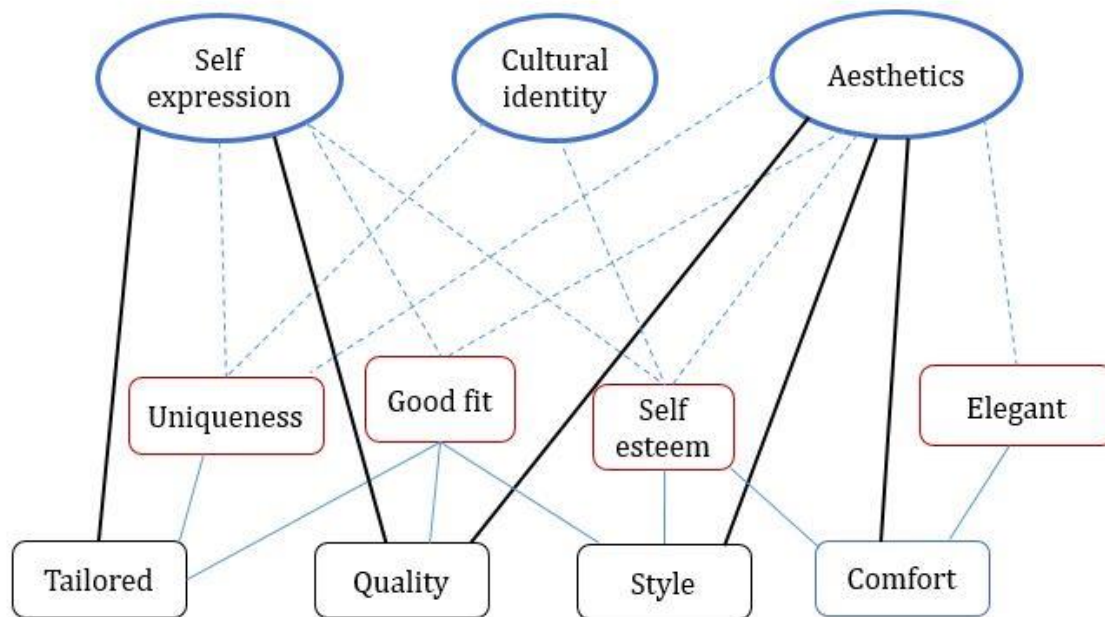


Figure 31. Example of Participant P11MU Hierarchical Value Map

This participant's main consumption goals (values) were self-expression, cultural identity and aesthetics. Values are the goal of consumption behind the choice and use of products, in this case the product is the collaboratively customized ethnic dress (Gutman, 1997; Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). The attributes of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress for this participant were; tailored, quality, style and comfort. When probed for the consequences, tailored connected to uniqueness and good fit, while quality connected to good fit, and style. More probing connected the consequences to the value: self-expression, cultural identity and aesthetics. This is then connected into a chain link referred to as the Means-End-Chain theory (M-E-C) (Gutman, 1997; Reynolds & Gutman 2001). HVM may show both direct and indirect connections between ACVs. The bold dark line (—) shows the direct relationship between the attributes and the values. The bold blue line (—) shows the direct relationship between the attributes and the consequences. While the blue dash line (---) shows the indirect relationship through the

consequences to the values Tailored and quality were directly related to self-expression, while tailored was indirectly related to self-expression through uniqueness. This shows that consumers often have underlying motives for consumption that is triggered through attributes and consequences (Reynolds & Gutman 2001).

Using the MEC theory a total of 32 motivations were revealed; 14 Attributes, 11 Consequences and 7 Values (ACV) from consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The attributes were: comfort, adaptable, simple to style, durable, quality, tailored, expensive, easy to maintain, good fabric (concrete attributes) and versatility, modest, style beautiful, classic (abstract attributes). The consequences of collaboratively customized ethnic dress were: satisfaction, good fit, uniqueness of dress, looking good, elegant, modesty investment (functional consequences) and satisfaction, self-esteem, sense of belonging, self-confidence, emotional attachment (psychological consequences). And finally, the values were: self-identity, self-expression, enhance creativity (instrumental) and cultural identity, aesthetics, social identity economic value (terminal values). All the ACVs were mentioned by the African immigrant women but at varying degrees that resulted into slight differences between the first and second-generation women. For example, fit was a very significant concern for the first-generation women than second generation. They claimed that their body shape was unique and that they would not get a ready-to-wear apparel that fitted them well and so customizing was the best option. But the second generation's main concern was the self-identity, they wanted to emphasize their self and their heritage to their peers by wearing the ethnic dress. The table below shows the attributes, consequences and values of each of the African immigrant women generations.

Research Question 4. What Motivates African Immigrant Women to Wear Their Ethnic Dress?

Research question for was answered by discussion the themes that emerged from the study. Motivations for the creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among African immigrant women in the USA showed dominant thematic patterns as: functionality, self-expression, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, adaptability and versatility, and cultural identity. These themes are discussed in relation to previous research.

Functionality. Functionality was found to be a motivational factor for the creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Functionality includes factors such as fabric, fit, comfort, quality, durability and ease of care. Functionality of apparel motivates consumers to buy and wear apparel (An & Lee, 2015; Brown & Rice, 2012; Lamb & Kallal, 1992). Fabric is a key factor that determines the quality of apparel. In this study, *Ankara* fabric, which is 100% cotton was frequently used to create ethnic dress. Cotton has great qualities such as durability, comfort to the skin, and it is a very strong fiber and easy to care for (Brown & Rice, 2012). The participants claimed to like the Ankara fabric because of its functionality.

Fit was found to be a motivational factor for the consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Fit results from proper measurement in relation to the body shape (Chen, 2007). Participants' body structure was significant for them and the body measurements used to produce their collaboratively customized ethnic dress, typically resulted in well fitting garments. African women's bodies are unique with larger waists, hips and thighs as compared to other races and this makes them experience fit problems (MacDonald et al., 2009; Mastamet-Mason, De Klerk, & Ashdown, 2012; Shin, & Istook, 2007). Thus, customized clothes that are made using specific body measurements of a consumer often creates better fitting garments

especially for the african women. According to the participants, collaborative customization led to a better fitting garment compared to the standard ready-to-wear items (Agrawal & Rahman, 2015). This is because the individual's body measurements were used to create the garment using the participant's desired fabric (Anikweze, 2012).

Participants also were dissatisfied with ready-to-wear clothes because of the lack of quality. Quality is often a consumer's motivation for apparel consumption (Brown & Rice, 2012). Apparel quality determines the performance of the apparel in terms of durability, comfort, fit and functional performance. Quality includes outward appearance of the apparel such as the design, fabric, construction, and finish. Consumers often find ready-to-wear clothes that are produced by fashion apparel companies to be similar in style and design, which affects their self-confidence and sense of uniqueness (McGrath, 2012), and creates dissatisfaction. Comfort of apparel was found to enhance quality. When superior quality is included in the apparel, then the consumer needs are met (Apeagyei et al., 2013; Brown & Rice, 2012; MacDonald et al., 2009; Song & Ashdown, 2010). The participants felt that the quality of their ethnic dress was significantly better than ready-to-wear apparel.

Self-Expression and Self-Esteem. Enhancing the self through self-expression, self-identity and social identity was another dominant theme and motivation for the consumption of African ethnic dress among the participants. This supported previous studies that indicate consumers will have a positive relationship with garments that bring out their self and renew their self-identity (Belk, 1988). Collaboratively customized ethnic dress was worn on several occasions and it allowed the wearers to express themselves, express their creativity, their style and their unique apparel without judgment. Women in general wear clothes to look good and

express their femininity (Miller, 1997; Gbadamosi, 2012). Creating the ethnic dress with a tailor also enhanced the participants' self-expression and self-creativity.

Wearing the dress in different occasion developed the participant's personal identity. Individuals create their personalities through self-identity, social-identity, gender, social roles, group membership, group affiliation, and self-esteem (Owen, 2006). The participants in this research like the ones in Tawfiq and Ogle's (2013) formed their self-identity by using their ethnic dress and appearance to communicate to the world that they were unique. They also identified styles that made them different from other women. Oftentimes, the headgear specifically was used to create a unique look and contributed to the participants' self-identity (Strübel, 2012).

Generally, dress plays a role in self-identification, when individuals wear what they like and use dress to express themselves (Belk, 1988; Eicher, 2003; Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). As the participants wore dress from their original culture it helped them to form their 'diasporic identity' being able to feel at home while away from home (Strübel, 2012, p.36). Forming a diasporic identity is important to an immigrant as it enables them to express themselves through cultural artifacts such as ethnic dress. In most situations, dress communicates an individual's social identity and their belonging to a social group and announces the social positions of the wearer to observers (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992). The participants in this study often used their *Aso-Ebi* to announce their belonging to a larger group. The use of group ethnic dress practices enhances the participants' identity in diaspora, thus constructing and presenting their desired self (Tawfiq & Ogle, 2013).

Adaptability and Versatility. Adaptability and versatility allow apparel to be used in a variety of ways and styles and for various occasions. The participants in the study, used African

ethnic dress for both formal and informal occasions because it was easily adaptable and versatile. Ease of styling into a variety of styles and the use of different headgear for each occasion allowed for design adaptability (Gu et al., 2004).

Collaboratively customized ethnic dress thus has both design adaptability, ability to create another item from the original one, and product adaptability, the ability to reverse and manipulate the same apparel and use it in a unique way (Gu et al., 2004). For design adaptability, it was easy to manipulate especially the wrap and the *Aso-Oke* scarf. The *Aso-Oke* scarf comes in two pieces, and an individual could tie one on the head and the other put on the shoulder or around the waist bringing out very unique styles. For product design adaptability, the *gele* was styled into either a simple or elaborate one depending on the occasion. Generally, the African ethnic fabric was used to design both simple apparel (for indoor use) and more complex styles (for parties or weddings) as was claimed by participants. This ability can enable the user to keep and use the adaptable apparel for longer periods and thus reduce frequent disposal thus impacting positively on sustainability. Studies have found that apparel that can be transformed into alternative styles such as: rolling, binding, tying, wrapping, folding or gathering, can appeal to consumers and be an alternative to too many garments (Rahman & Gong, 2016 p. 234) leading to sustainability.

Aesthetics. The participants were attached to their ethnic dress because of its visually appealing beauty such as the elaborate colored fabric and pleasant memories. Other characteristics such as color of the fabric, line, form, pattern and texture contribute to the aesthetics of a dress (Adelaja et al., 2016; Lamb & Kallal, 1992; MacDonald et al., 2009). The beauty of a garment is often seen in the feeling of comfort and fabric (Niinimäki, 2011a). Participants were motivated to wear the African ethnic dress because of the beauty of the fabric,

the elaborate colors of the fabric, patterns on the fabric and the styles that can be created using the fabric. Participants wore the dress because of its color and style (MacDonald et al., 2009).

Participants considered less exposure of body parts as modesty and more appealing as an aesthetic characteristic of African ethnic dress. This was found more among the first-generation women. The second-generation women had more exposure of body parts, they preferred shorter skirts, and sleeveless tops. This could be attributed to integration of these participants into the value system of the host culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). Western culture emphasizes individualism where dressing is an individual's choice unlike the collectivism culture (where first generation were raised before coming to the USA) which emphasizes dressing according to societal norms, meaning dress is expected to be modest (Hofstede, 2011).

The second generation have adapted the dressing culture of the host and abandoned the emphasis on modesty from their ethnic culture as they become bicultural (Sam & Berry, 2010). Supporting previous research, consumers from collectivist cultures (like African cultures) consider and choose design that is acceptable by their culture and is relevant to age and gender while those from individualistic cultures (like the USA) are more casual in their choice of apparel (An & Lee, 2015). As the second-generation participants transitioned into the more individualistic culture, their dress norms have also changed, as they integrate into the new host culture.

Emotional Attachment and Clothing Longevity. Consumer emotional needs can be met through consumer engagement in the design process (Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013; Norman 2005). Memories and enjoyment during the design process contributes to product attachment (Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013). Such memories and enjoyment can create emotional satisfaction for the consumer and if the consumer's emotional design needs are met, they become

emotionally satisfied (An & Lee, 2015). Thus, when the African immigrant women collaboratively customized their ethnic dress, their emotional needs were met. In this study most of the participants had some form of long term relationships with their tailor. They created their ethnic dress with the help of a tailor (Anikweze, 2012).

Sewing their clothes for several years made the tailor know and predict the participant's apparel needs and preferences. The participants had formed memories with the design process and with the design product and had their needs met in the collaborative customization process (Niinimäki & Armstrong, 2013). Emotional connection is a point in which an individual and the object of consumption form a relationship bond that elicits positive feelings. This was evident with participants in this study. Participants had lived with their collaboratively customized African ethnic dress for as long as thirty years, citing emotional connection and attachment to them. They had formed lasting memories because of the emotional connection, leading to long life span for their collaboratively customized African ethnic dress. Therefore, this supported previous research that emotional connection to products can slow down the life cycle of the garment, increase their life span and thus has an impact on sustainability (Chapman, 2009; Lobos & Babbitt, 2013). Eventually this can reduce the amounts of clothes individuals dispose of.

With consumer needs and design strategies changing, a strong consumer product relationship will extend life span of products and lead to satisfaction. The findings of Niinimäki and Armstrong (2013) were supported by this research, because the participants were able to add value through designing products they wanted, they were likely to form special relationship and attachment with them. The deeper special relationship may be because of emotional connection.

Cultural Identity. This research demonstrates that African immigrant women maintain elevated levels of identity with their ethnicity, as seen in their use of traditional ethnic dress. This supported previous research which found that West African women have a very strong cultural identity and relationship with their ethnic dress (Ogbaa, 2003; Strübel, 2012). Cultural identification was a major theme of this study supporting previous findings that people use ethnic dress as a form of differentiation and identification to a group (Chattaraman & Lennon, 2008). Participants used dress to communicate identity, personal and group values (Lawal, 2010).

In most situations, dress communicates an individual's cultural identity and belonging to an ethnic or cultural group and announces the social positions of the wearer to observers. For example, in this study, the participants wore the *Aso-Ebi* to weddings and parties to communicate that they were in solidarity with the celebrants (Castonguay, 2009), this was to identify with others within the same ethnic group thus boosting their self-esteem (Roach-Higgins & Eicher, 1992; Strübel, 2012). This finding supported previous research that consumers use ethnic dress to identify themselves with their heritage and that those with high ethnic identity, often use dress that reflects and expresses their identity (Apeagyei et. al., 2008; Lamb & Kallal, 1992; MacDonald et al., 2009).

The African immigrant women were also motivated by their cultural heritage and cultural identity to consume the ethnic dress. Culturally related products such as apparel are used by consumers to show their ethnic identity (Eicher et al., 2014). The participants also expressed their cultural identity by wearing the collaboratively customized ethnic dress including wearing it to work. Cultural identity was a goal behind consumption of this dress and other groups of consumers have also been found to use dress to express cultural identity (Apeagyai, 2008; Lamb & Kallal, 1992; MacDonald et al., 2009).

The results indicated that African immigrant women were motivated by a variety of attributes, consequences and values (ACV) to consume their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The strong linkage among the ACV's led to emergent thematic patterns that summarize the motivations for wearing collaboratively customized ethnic dress. These thematic patterns are: functionality, self-expressions, self-esteem, adaptability and versatility, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, cultural identity and collaborative customization. The themes above motivated the African immigrant women to wear their ethnic dress.

Question Research 5. Are There Differences Between the Motivations of First Generation and Second-Generation African Immigrant Women?

First and second generation African immigrant women had both similarities and differences in their motivations for consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress. This was caused by differences in their acculturation stage. Second generation were more bicultural as compared to first generation (Berry & Sam, 1997; Sam & Berry, 2010). The difference between the first and second generation can be explained by the fact that the young people (second generation) often choose to acculturate through integration, they choose to be bicultural, by being involved with both their heritage culture and the host culture (Sam & Berry, 2010). The bicultural way of living includes many ways of engaging in both cultures and often results in cultural identities of both ethnic and host culture (Berry & Sam, 1997). The study found that most second-generation African immigrant women choose to wear an African shirt with jeans or pants or African skirt with contemporary blouse in order to blend with both cultures. They also attended social engagements such as birthday parties that had been organized by either group – ethnic or host peers (Berry & Sam, 1997). All the underlying values in ACV link, motivated the first generation and second-generation immigrant women in this study.

Cultural identity was important for both groups. They all mentioned that the collaboratively customized ethnic dress made them identify with their African culture of which they wanted to be proud of. They used the ethnic dress as a form of identity, diasporic identity (Diop & Merunka, 2013; Chattaraman & Lennon 2006; Strübel 2012). Diasporic identity helps individuals wear the dress to help them connect with their homeland while in diaspora.

Similar to the participants in MacDonald et al., (2009) study, the African immigrant women consider less exposure of body parts as being more modest and more appealing as an aesthetic characteristic of African ethnic dress. This was found more among first generation women (Diop & Merunka, 2013). The second-generation women had more exposure of body parts, they preferred shorter skirts, and sleeveless tops. This supported previous research by An and Lee (2015), consumers with collective culture background pay attention to dress that enhances the social norms of their culture while those from individualistic are more casual in their choice.

Considering that the second generation have picked aspects of the host culture then they are likely to dress like them, functional characteristics such as fit and comfort; expressive characteristics such as modesty, cultural identity and self-esteem; and aesthetics: overall appeal, stylish, design details and color combination, flattering and showing of body curves were more significant motivational factors in the creation and consumption of ethnic dress among both groups of African immigrant women (Adelaja et al., 2016; Lamb & Kallal, 1992).

The self is also a dominant theme for the consumption of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress by both groups. This finding supported previous studies that indicate consumers will have a positive relationship with garments that bring out their self and renew their self-identity as well as use garments that enhance self-expression and cultural heritage (Diop & Merunka, 2013;

Chattaraman & Lennon 2006; Strübel 2012). From the results it also emerged that the participants were satisfied with customizing their ethnic dress since they believed that their efforts in contributing to the design process had paid off, supporting previous studies (McGrath, 2012; Norman 2005).

Both generations wore African ethnic dress, however, the first generation made and styled their collaboratively customized ethnic dress differently from their daughters who were mostly second generation. This supported previous research by Erik (2014) and Yashuko et. al., (2008) who found that while first generation immigrants preserved their culture through use of artifacts such as dress, second generation immigrants selected which cultural aspects to keep. As discussed earlier, the second-generation immigrants depended on their mothers to help in purchasing fabric and taking them to the tailor, this are similar comments to Erick (2014), that parents do influence the identity of second generation immigrants.

Wearing of the ethnic dress had several motivations for both African immigrant women generations. It can be attributed to several, attributes, consequences and values they obtained in its use. Wearing the ethnic dress was a source of pride, self-identity, beauty, and uniqueness. They used their collaboratively customized dress for special occasions supporting previous studies who found that traditional dress user's equivalent to use of ethnic dress used their dress for similar occasions (Diop & Merunka, 2013; Gbadamosi, 2012; Strübel, 2012).

Results show that the first generation and second generation were motivated by all the values: self-identity, cultural identity, self-expression, aesthetics, and social identity, creativity enhancement, and economic value. The results showed that there were differences between the motivations of first and second generation African immigrant women concerning collaborative customization of the ethnic dress. The difference between generations is most likely due to the

acculturation process. Second generation were more bicultural as compare to the first generation and this influenced their styles, design selection, relationship with the tailor, types of dresses they made, and styling of the collaboratively customized ethnic dress.

There were also differences in the way the two groups of women got inspiration for designing their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. First generation women were inspired by their tailor, other African women and sometimes by googling on the internet. They also got inspiration from women who lived in Africa. Second generation women were mostly inspired by celebrities from Hollywood such as filmmakers, musicians among others. They claimed they had seen personalities such as Beyoncé, Lupita Nyong'o and former First lady Michelle Obama, wearing apparel made of *Ankara*, and this inspired them. Second generation who were fond of social media, got inspiration by following some designers with online presence and who created apparel using African fabric.

Another difference was in the way they created and styled the African ethnic dress. First generation women preferred modest apparel that covered most of the body parts, while second generation preferred shorter and fitting styles, short or sleeveless apparel. First generation women preferred loose apparel like blouses (*buba*) to wear with a wrap skirt, second generation preferred to create clinging apparel that showed their cleavage. When it came to styling, the first generation preferred more elaborate styles especially the headgear, the *gele*, but the second generation preferred simple styles. For second generation women the headgear was mainly when they had to wear the *Aso-Ebi* for an occasion, and they also did not like the wrap skirt for fear of not tying it well like their mothers. They liked wearing simple pieces like a blouse made of *Ankara* with a pair of jeans or a skirt made of *Ankara* fabric with a contemporary styled blouse.

Proposed Model of ACV and Collaborative Customization

African immigrants' women motivation for creating and consumption of collaboratively customized African dress can be due to the attributes, consequences values they get from both the product and the process of collaborative customization as summarized by the model below. The model shows a modified ACV of motivations for consumption and creation of African ethnic dress.

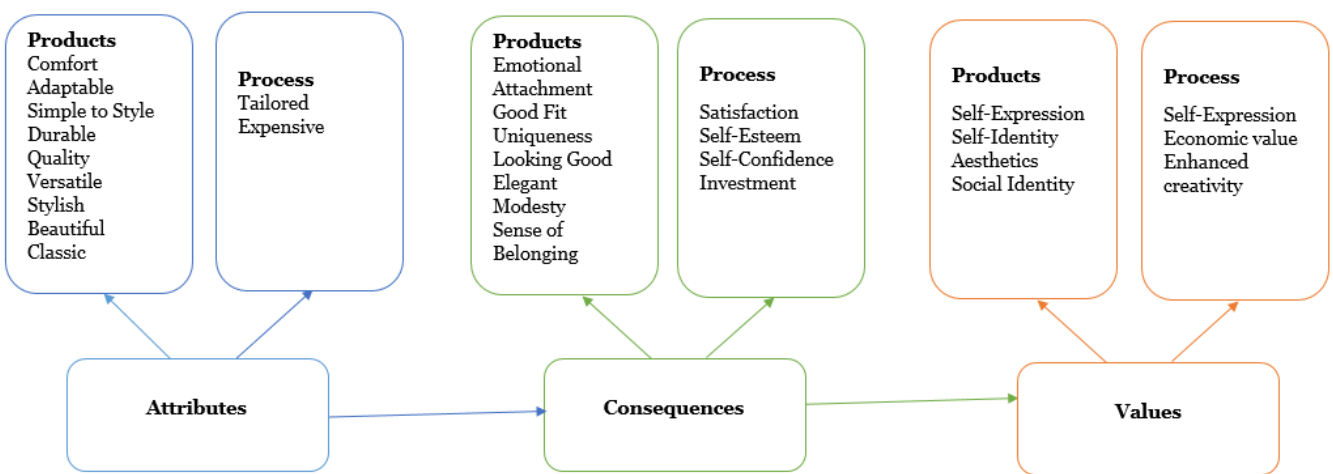


Figure 32. Proposed Model of A-C-V and Collaborative Customization

CHAPTER 6. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the motivations to collaboratively customize ethnic dress among African immigrant women. The research investigated and examined the attributes, the consequences and the values underlying the consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress using Means end chain, MEC theory (Gutman, 1997). Differences and similarities between motivations for creation and consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among first and second generation African immigrant women living in the US were also explored. The research had four objectives to achieve and five research questions to answer. To answer the research questions, a qualitative approach was utilized, using the laddering technique. Laddering is an interview technique that helps to reveal underlying, deeper meanings of consumer consumption through probing questions (Reynolds & Gutman, 2001). Photo elicitation, which increases participants' willingness, openness and interest to participate in the interview was also used to collect data (Richard & Lahaman, 2015). Data were analyzed using constant comparison method to generate categories and themes. Open coding was done, categories developed, and themes developed. Next, content analysis was done to find the most frequently mentioned words and to locate the attributes, consequences and values, ACVs. NVivo software was also used to manage the data to generate the word cloud and the word tree, word query which were also used to generate the ACVs.

A total of 24 women were purposively sampled for the study. The participants were African immigrant women living in the USA who ranged in age between 21-54 years old. According to this study, first generation African immigrant women were participants who migrated to the USA as mature women, while second generation African women were participants that were born in the USA or migrated to the USA when they were five years old or

younger. Fifteen of the participants were first generation immigrants, while nine were second generation immigrants representing 62% and 38% respectively. Of the 24 participants, 14 (58%) were married, 9 (38%) were single and 1 (4%) widowed. A total of 45% of participants said they had a bachelors or some graduate degree for their education level. Seventy one percent (n=17) had lived for at least 16 years and above in the USA. A total of 29% (n=7) had lived in the United States between 5 and 15 years.

Findings revealed that the older women, who were mainly first generation, preferred their ethnic dress to be made in the form of wrap skirts and loosely fitting tops, the younger or second generation preferred pants, short dresses, skirts and tops that they could pair up with jeans or pants. The head wrap or the *gele* was common among the participants. The African ethnic dress worn by the participants was often made from fabrics such as the *Ankara*, *Kente*, *Aso-Oke*, *Georgette*, *Hollandaise* and *lace*, with *Ankara* being the most commonly used fabric. Fabrics were sourced and bought online from Africa and Europe (France, Britain, and Belgium). The participants wore their African ethnic dress to social functions such as to the church, birthday and wedding parties, naming ceremonies and other religious ceremonies. Participants wore their ethnic dress to church because of its “decency” or modesty. *Aso-Ebi* was a style that many of the participants wore for occasions that required them to show unity with the celebrants.

Collaborative customization was the process where the participants worked with a tailor to create a desired ethnic dress. The tailors were also African immigrants who had been tailors in Africa before they relocated to the USA. Most participants created their ethnic dress with the help of the tailor, those who did not claimed that they always made better clothes than most tailors, but ironically, they wanted the tailors to make more complicated designs for them. Most participants were inspired by the internet, other African women, celebrities and fashion bloggers.

The tailor helped them in their choice of styles and findings while they solely chose the fabric and most times the styles. The association between participants and the tailor resulted in personal relationships with them. African immigrant women gave reasons such as: fit (because of their body measurement being used in the creation process), their input into the process (like choice of fabric and style) and the beauty of the final dress as reasons to continue with the process of collaborative customization.

There were strong links between the attributes, consequences and values that revealed dominant themes: functionality, self-expression, self-esteem, adaptability and versatility, aesthetics, emotional attachment and clothing longevity, and cultural identity. Functionality referred to the functional qualities that made African immigrant women want to wear their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. This research indicated that African immigrant women collaboratively customized and consumed ethnic dress due its functional attributes such as: fabric, fit and comfort, and quality, durability of the dress and ease of care. Self-expression was another important motivation for wearing this type of dress, as it boosted the self-esteem, self-image, and gave the participants a chance to be creative. Participants were also motivated by cultural and ethnic identity values where they felt that the collaboratively customized dress connected them to their heritage, cultural roots and a feeling of home away from home.

Using the MEC theoretical framework, fourteen attributes, eleven consequences and seven values of consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress were identified. The elements of motivation included concrete and abstract attributes; functional and psychosocial consequences and instrumental and terminal values. Both first and second generation African immigrant women were motivated by the attributes, consequences and values such as cultural

identity. They used their collaboratively customized ethnic dress to show pride for their culture. These findings supported previous research.

Differences were found between the motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress among first generation and second-generation African immigrant women. Second generation women preferred blending the African fabric with other fabrics, less elaborate headgear and blending ethnic apparel with jeans, contemporary blouses and dress pants for office wear. The first generation had more emotional attachment to their ethnic dress, expressed their creativity when working with the tailor, developed personal relationships with the tailor and typically wore their ethnic dress more often and with elaborate headgear. These findings supported previous studies on ethnic dress and acculturation. Second generation immigrants often integrate into a host culture and become bicultural by picking aspects of culture from both ethnic and host cultures. The participants underlying values for consumption collaboratively customized ethnic dress were: a sense of belonging, self-identity, economic value, self-confidence, aesthetics, self-expression, and cultural identity. However, it was interesting to note that the collaboratively customized dress was easily adaptable and versatile. They could wear their dress differently with minimum manipulation to create unique styles to a variety of occasions.

The women had special memories with their ethnic dresses, so they wore them more frequently and kept them longer. It may, therefore, be concluded that collaborative customization of apparel can contribute to sustainability, since it increases garment attachment and leads to longer ownership, which can reduce apparel disposal. This process increased the relationship between the tailor (designer) and the consumer, the consumer invested valuable resources such as money and time and thus developed a special relationship with the dress. They saw the dress

as an investment for their time and money. Therefore, this study suggests that collaborative customization can be used by designers to encourage fashion sustainability. Collaborative customization enabled consumers to become proactive in the design process by having their needs incorporated in their desired products. In this study it was found that the participants worked with the tailor to produce a desired garment.

Similarly, in co-designing consumers work with a designer to create a product that meets their need. The participants working with their tailors created a dress to which they became emotionally attached. In the long run participants lived long with the designed product. Therefore, collaborative customization contributes to sustainability in that the use of this design process results into garments that consumers get emotionally attached. Personal and emotion attachment then translates to long clothing life span, reducing quick disposal of clothing. This means fewer clothes disposed within a given period, reducing landfills and contributing positively to the sustainability. On the other hand, the consumers often made the apparel when they had special occasions, and this created bonding between them and the dress, as it reminded them of the occasion.

Finally, this study employed Means-end chain (MEC) theory (Gutman, 1997) to explore the attributes, consequences and underlying values that African immigrant women get when consuming collaboratively customized ethnic dress. This theory revealed underlying, deeper meanings of consumer motivations. The results demonstrate that the self, aesthetics, social identity and cultural identity are critical final values for creating and consuming collaboratively customized ethnic dress among this group of African immigrant women in the USA.

Implications

Findings from this study extended the literature by exploring the motivations for collaborative customization, and motivations for consumption of ethnic dress among first and second generation African immigrant women. By doing an exploratory study, this research shed light on attributes, consequences and values obtained in consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress. The African immigrant women were motivated to use their collaboratively customized ethnic dress because of the underlying values such as self-identity, self-expression, enhancing creativity, cultural identity aesthetics, social identity and economic value that they got from it. Ethnic dress is an important part of a cultural group, and since most immigrants have a heritage, the ethnic dress becomes an important part of cultural identification and social belonging to the various groups.

Specifically, for this ethnic group their collaboratively customized ethnic dress was adaptable and versatile to use. This could have implications for sustainability, because studies have shown that garments that can be transformed, that means they are adaptable and versatile, can appeal to consumers and reduce overclothing. In the long run fewer clothes will be bought and thus an implication for sustainability.

Besides, this research also has implications for understanding ethnic dress consumption among first and second-generation immigrant women. Preferences among generations for ethnic dress may differ. Each generational cohort may have their own motivations that are unique to them. This study provides insights into the use of the combination of hierarchical goal-directed consumer behavior approach and the MEC theory as theoretical viewpoints. It also gives implications for the laddering technique as a data collection and analysis technique that can be

effectively used to get underlying consumer behavior goals and not just for understanding the collaborative customization of apparel but other processes a consumer engages in.

Implications for marketers are related to tailoring products, brand values and communication messages to the subjective, self-rewarding and “internalized” consumption sought after by consumers. A desirable method of apparel design that caters to consumer needs, like collaborate customization, is important. The design process needs to meet the consumer expectations such as; quality, fit, self-expression, self-identity and social identity. There are different motivations for first and second generation African immigrant women when they consume their collaboratively customized ethnic dress. Marketers wanting to provide for this consumer groups need to understand their generational cohorts and their preferences, so that they may meet their needs and underlying values.

For practical implications, designers can encourage collaborative customization of apparel among consumers. Such collaborative customization can have an impact for sustainability. From the study results, participants had a special attachment and memories with their customized apparel because of the time and effort invested in the design process, the occasion for creating the apparel, and underlying values such as sense of belonging cultural identity, aesthetics, self-identity, self-expression, and enhancing creativity. Participants tended to keep these items for longer periods of time because they were emotionally attached to the items. This attachment caused many participants to wear their collaborative customized ethnic apparel at least 3 times a year and live with it for up to 30 years. Thus, collaborative customization as a sustainability process can reduce frequent apparel disposal as it can increase the relationship between clothing and consumers and increase the life span of apparel.

For fashion designers, manufacturers and retailers the implications are for them to engage consumers in the design process to help fight for sustainability in the fashion industry. If designers encourage collaborative customization (investing time, money and creativity) then the consumers will be emotionally attached to the product, have special memories with the designed garment, postpone disposal of the item and increase the clothing life span. Therefore, designers need to give consumers opportunities to participate in designing their apparel.

Established and aspiring small and medium enterprises (SMEs), can tap into this collaborative customization design model and cater for this consumer group. As seen in the results, participants developed a lasting personal relationship with their tailors. To be able to meet the demands for high quality garments and emotional satisfaction of apparel, consumers and designers need to collaborate. In this way consumers' needs are met in the final product, leading to high consumer satisfaction and loyalty. Therefore, collaboratively customization of apparel can encourage the responsibility of caring for the apparel and increased apparel life span because it is a form of investment. Clothing longevity, thus, can reduce frequency of disposal and have a positive impact on sustainability.

Since the tailors were from Africa, collaborative customization can thus be an entrepreneurial opportunity for African immigrants who were tailors in Africa or are ready to learn some tailoring techniques.

Limitations and Future Research

One limitation of this study is that the quantitative component of the analysis using the (MEC) theory that shows the aggregates of the ACV to help in construction of the hierarchical value map (HVM) was not done, because it was not an objective of this research. The HVM often shows the relationship among the attributes, consequences and values of consumption, this

relationship can either be direct or indirect. Future research should be done to understand the relationship among the attributes, consequences and values of consumption of collaboratively customized ethnic dress.

Another limitation was that only women from West Africa were sampled for this research, although this was not the original intention. Through snowballing method of sampling, the participants identified others who wore their ethnic dress. This is likely to have resulted into biased results. Therefore, future studies can engage women from other African regions. The small sample was another limitation of this study thus, the findings of this research cannot be generalized to the wider population of African immigrant women living in the USA.

Men also had an interest in collaboratively customized ethnic dress, they designed outfits using similar fabrics with their wives, and it would be interesting to explore their specific motivations. Future studies can look at the motivations for consuming the ethnic dress among male participants and compare them with those of women. A follow up to this study should be done and can target a larger sample of African immigrant women living in US. For this study using quantitative methods or mixed methods to collect data would also be valuable.

Future studies can explore the collaborative customization process and its implication for sustainability. Future studies can also explore the lasting relationships between the participants and the tailor and its implications for sustainability. Research could also be done to explore how other ethnic groups besides African immigrants design their dress and what motivates them to wear this dress.

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APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Motivations for consumption of collaboratively customized African ethnic dress

1. Introduction

First thank the interviewee for their time and briefly outline the approach to be applied:

- Request their acceptance for the audio-recording of the interview
- Provide some background on the study and planned outcomes

Purpose: To explore the motivations for the consumption of collaboratively customized African ethnic dress

Demographics

Age

Education level

Marital/partner status?

Age were you when you came to the US?

Years lived in the US

Interview Questions

1. What types of ethnic dress do you collaboratively custom design and wear (wraps, head gears, made apparel), when do you wear them?
2. What motivates you in the US to collaboratively customize and design your ethnic dress?

(Design related questions)

- How do you create your ethnic dress?
 - How did you decide on the style?
 - Did you help design this outfit?
 - Where did you get ideas for this outfit?
 - Where did you get the fabric?
3. What attributes, consequences (functional and psychological benefits) and values do you get from collaborative custom designed ethnic dress? (Motivations for customization)

- Tell me the characteristics that appeal to you?
- Why would you choose to wear an African ethnic dress over ready-to-wear apparel?
- Do you style these pieces differently depending on the event?
- Why would you wear your ethnic dress in the US?

4. What motivates African immigrant women to wear their ethnic dress? (Motivations to wear ethnic dress -Photo elicitation) For the outfit, please:

- Tell me a little about when you wore this outfit.
- How did you feel about this outfit?
- What made you wear this ethnic apparel?
- Which occasion was this? Is there any occasion in which this apparel would not be appropriate? Why?
- Who influences your style?
- Is your ethnic dress style influenced by your country of origin?
- While dressed in your ethnic dress, can anyone know your home country?
- Do other African immigrant women influence your style choice?

5. Are there differences between the motivations of first generation and second-generation African immigrant women?

Describe how you style or wear your ethnic dress?

- Do you have a daughter, does she wear ethnic dress? How does she wear it? Is it same or different from you? Describe
OR (2nd Generation)
- How does your mother wear her ethnic dress?
- Does she wear it the same way or in an unusual way than you?

APPENDIX B. IRB APPLICATION



Institutional R Board

Mon 12/11/2017, 4:19 PM

Jane A Opiri; Casey R Stannard ↕



Reply | ▾

Hi,

The IRB chair reviewed your application, Consumer Motivations for Consumption of Collaborative Customized Ethnic Dress; a Study of First and Second Generation African immigrant women in the US, and determined IRB approval for this specific application (IRB# E10820) is not needed. There is no manipulation of, nor intervention with, human subjects. Should you subsequently devise a project which does involve the use of human subjects, then IRB review and approval will be needed. Please include in your recruiting statements or intro to your survey, the IRB looked at the project and determined it did not need a formal review.

You can still conduct your study. It falls under a certain category that does not need IRB approval.

Elizabeth



Elizabeth Cadarette

IRB Coordinator

Office of Research and Economic Development

Louisiana State University

130 David Boyd Hall, Baton Rouge, LA 70803

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LSU Research - The Constant Pursuit of Discovery

African Dress Research

LSU – Louisiana State University

Looking for interested
Participants:

- Are you an African woman?
- Do you wear African dress occasionally?
- Do have photos of your favorite African dress?
- Want help with the African dress research



When? Spring 2018

Where? At your convenient Location

What? Interview

Why? African Dress Research

Contacts: Jane Opiri @jopiri1@lsu.edu (225-993-9120)
for more information. Thank you!

VITA

Jane Andayi Opiri received her Bachelor of Education in Home Economics from Kenyatta University, Kenya. Thereafter, she taught high school for some years. She later decided to continue with graduate studies in the department of Textiles, Apparel Design, and Merchandising at Louisiana State University where she received her Master of Science degree. After graduation she immediately enrolled in a doctoral program in the same department. While doing her doctoral program she briefly taught at Southeastern Louisiana University. She is a member of International Textiles and Apparel Association (ITAA), American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) and Gamma Sigma Delta the honor society of Agriculture.